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The Hung Society

Vol. III.

THE PEACH OF LONG LIFE.

The Hung Society

OR

The Society of Heaven and Earth

BY

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PREFACE.

IN this concluding volume we shall endeavour to discover the magical significance of many peculiar incidents in the Hung ceremonies, which task accomplished we can then devote ourselves to a consideration of the mystical interpretation of the Rite. Therein we shall discover that, despite the evil reputation which the Society has gained, it teaches mystically the bitter experiences and numerous obstacles encountered by the aspiring soul on its journey back to God. Is it too much to hope that the Society may arise from the depths into which it has fallen and become once more the vehicle for sublime spiritual teaching to the Chinese Nation, and if possible a common meeting ground on which men of every religion can co-operate in harmony? To the Buddhist and Christian Chinese alike such a possibility should appeal most strongly, and if once adopted the Hung Society might prove a bond of union between men of diverse religious beliefs, just as Freemasonry does in the West. That this is a possibility most ardently to be desired no well-wisher of China will deny, and it is particularly an ideal which may appeal to a thoughtful Christian Missionary who, while desirous of converting the Chinese, is anxious to prevent that country from breaking up into a series of warring religious factions.

Before concluding I must express my gratitude to Dr. A. C. Haddon for much kindly assistance and advice, and also to Dr. Giles of the British Museum. At the same time I would register my indebtedness to the writings of J. J. M. de Groot, Sir J. G. Frazer, and the numerous other authors to whom I refer in the work.

Finally, I have to thank the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office for permission to reproduce from Mr. Bushell's valuable book, *Chinese Art*, published by the Victoria and Albert Museum, illustrations number II, III, VII, VIII, the Director of the above Museum for a like courtesy in the case of Nos. XIII and XIV, and the Director of the British Museum for permitting the use of illustrations number X, XII, XV, XXI.

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CHAPTER I.

MAGIC AND MYSTICISM IN THE HUNG RITE.

N the second volume we set out to show that the framework of the Hung ceremony dealt with the journey of the soul through the Underworld to the City of the Gods, wherein we gave numerous parallel legends which seemed to prove that fact, but there still remain certain details in the Hung ritual which, coupled with what has gone before, will satisfy all students on this point. Among these are references to the funeral customs still prevalent in China, such as the use of certain woods for coffins, the offering of certain sacrifices, and the manner in which the dead are clothed for their last journey.

While going into these details it will also be necessary to indicate certain magical beliefs and customs which appear in the Hung ritual, some of which, at any rate, also occur in the funeral ceremonies. Their purpose is to assist the dead man to increase his vitality and to protect him from the attacks of evil spirits. That such customs should exist in China will probably be the less surprising in view of the prevalence of similar beliefs in ancient Egypt, with whose ceremonial, as set forth in the Book of the Dead, we became conversant in Volume II. Having dealt with this aspect of the subject, it will be necessary to endeavour to unravel to some extent the mystical meaning of the ceremony, for in addition to the allegory depicting the journey of the soul we have already noticed traces of an inner, mystical meaning, such as is very usual in similar rites elsewhere. The principal key to this Mystery teaching lies in the symbolic meaning of various numbers, although it is by no means restricted to them. Hence the necessity for a special chapter on numbers, wherein we shall find many striking similarities with the use of numbers in Western Rites. At the same time we shall perceive that in some cases rather a different aspect of a number is stressed than is the case in the West, and in the more complex numbers, such as 36 and 72, we shall perhaps find a hint which will help us to interpret the use of similar complex numbers in European Rites.

As a result of our study we shall certainly be impressed by two facts. Firstly, that the Hung Society has numerous striking analogies with the fragmentary information we possess concerning the ancient Mystery Rites of the Classical era, with which, be it noted, it was contemporary. It will therefore enable us to envisage more clearly than ever before what those Rites actually were and to interpret many obscure references which are at present most puzzling to the student. In this connection it seems desirable to say that

although in the earlier volumes I may seem to have left it rather an open question as to whether the White Lotus Society and the Hung are one and the same, I have come to the definite conclusion that for all practical purposes they may be so regarded. It is possible that the White Lotus may be considered as representing the earlier degrees of the Rite which now seem to be lost, of which the Hung Society was the advanced degree. My reasons for these conclusions are numerous, but perhaps what has weighed with me most is the definite statement in Schlegel that the two Societies are the same. He was a most painstaking student and not likely to make a definite statement of this nature unless he was completely satisfied on the point. In addition, practically every writer who mentions the White Lotus identifies it with the Society of Heaven and Earth, which we definitely know to be the same as the Hung Society. Both Keeson and Stanton clearly regard them as the same, and the only fact which might lead us to think otherwise is that five societies are mentioned in the Sacred Edict, of which two are the White Lotus and the Hung Society. My own conclusion of the problem thus raised is that the Manchu dynasty included every name by which the Society was then known, so that its officials might have no excuse for not acting on the Edict, and particular branches or Lodges could not escape on the plea that they were called *The Hung Society*, and not, *The White Lotus*. It is, however, possible that all these societies were simply different grades of the same great Order. An exact parallel would arise if some European Government were to issue a decree suppressing Freemasonry and order its officers to suppress all lodges of Freemasons, Royal Arch Masons, Members of the Rose Croix, Knights of Malta, and Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

At any rate, it is clear that in the 18th century the White Lotus Society and the Hung were so completely mixed up, and so often changed their names, that in the eyes of the Government Officials they had to be treated merely as branches of the same Order, while the avowed existence of five Provincial Grand Lodges, who thus correspond in number with the five Societies named in the Edict, immediately suggests a direct connection.

VITALITY OF MYSTERY RITES.

The second point which emerges from the history of the Hung Society is the vitality of Mystery Rites. For 1500 years this Order has existed, and for the last 250 it has been persecuted relentlessly by the Chinese authorities. In the last 100 years a similar fate has befallen it in many areas where thoroughly efficient European Governments rule supreme. As a result of this persecution men of social standing, material wealth, and probably of education have not dared to enter its doors, and yet here in the 20th century we find it surviving, although often in the hands of men of the criminal class. Moreover, the ancient landmarks have been preserved, and, despite the political bias which

has been introduced into its ritual, it is perfectly possible to recover its original and true meaning. These facts suggest that similar Rites may still survive almost unknown in other parts of the world, and also that those who argue that certain Western Initiation Rites have behind them an immemorial antiquity are not suggesting anything at all unreasonable or absurd.

Before turning to the earlier sections of the book, wherein we shall find reference to magical and semi-magical practices, it seems desirable to say a few words on the meaning attached to the word Magical in this work. This word has recently grown to be used in a somewhat loose sense, thus it is even applied to such things as the touch of the musician, which is sometimes described as being, "truly magical." By this phase the speaker merely means that it was "superb" or "wonderful," but magical has a clear scientific meaning. It implies that by performing certain Rites, or speaking certain spells, an otherwise unobtainable result can be achieved. There are many sub-divisions of the Art, of which, perhaps, the most important are what may be designated *Sympathetic Magic*, and *Ceremonial Magic*, although to some extent the former may also be regarded as ceremonial.

SYMPATHETIC AND CEREMONIAL MAGIC.

Sympathetic Magic works on the principle that *like produces like*, and that if you perform a certain act, nature, or other men, will copy you. Rain-making Magic is, perhaps, the simplest form of this belief, whereby in order to produce rain the rain-maker throws water about and pours it on the ground. The idea here is based on a characteristic of primitive man, which is to copy someone else, a characteristic shared by the whole of the primates, i.e., the monkeys and apes. The number of rites and ceremonies which are based on Sympathetic Magic are legion, and probably this is the oldest form of magic known. But there is another form of magic, and to this we will give the name, *Ceremonial Magic*, the underlying principle of which is the coercion of men or spirits by the strong will of the Operator. So far as men are concerned it possesses a substratum of reality, based on the principles of hypnotism, and one of its crudest and grimmest forms is that in which the operator strives to compass the death of an enemy by performing certain acts without coming into contact with the victim. Among the Australian Bushmen "pointing the bone" is the most usual method employed. A bone is prepared with suitable incantations and spells, and then is pointed at the victim, or at any rate in his direction, at the same time a spell is uttered which conveys the wish that he may die. Strange as it may sound, there is no doubt that in many cases this spell works, the European explanation being that on discovering that the ceremony has been performed the victim simply goes home and dies of fear. He is convinced that he will die and die he does, and no European doctor can save him. Among civilised races more elaborate ceremonies are required, and

the usual custom is to make a figure of the victim, generally of wax, and either to stick pins into it or burn it in the fire. Such practices were common in Mediæval Europe, and since fear *does* kill there is no reason for doubting that in some cases the magician achieved his object, and when detected richly deserved the fate which was meted out to him, although there may have been many miscarriages of justice, such as were, unfortunately, only too common in Mediæval criminal actions where an unpopular person was accused of some crime.

Similar magical practices exist in India and China to-day, and it is not always necessary to make a complete figure since a fragment of a person, such as his hair, or even his reflection, will often serve equally well. A recent example related to me by a retired Indian Civil Servant will illustrate not only this point, but also the importance of the hair-cutting ceremony in the Hung Rite. Soon after my friend was appointed to an important office in Assam a man came before him, flung himself on his knees and cried, "Save me, Sahib!" The man was obviously in abject terror and the Civil Servant enquired, "From what shall I save you? How are you in danger?" The suppliant replied, "I am in danger of death, for the Headman of my village has stolen a lock of my hair and is about to build a new Temple." The Sahib knew at once what was afoot and that unless he could invent a counterspell the man would simply die of fear. The Headman was anxious to obtain a human sacrifice in order to establish his new Temple and make it stand firm for ever, and it was believed that by taking the hair of a victim and burying it under one of the foundation stones, or pillars, the owner of the hair would die and his spirit enter into the walls and strengthen them. With commendable promptitude and presence of mind the Sahib rose to the occasion and invented the following counterspell. "A Buffalo," he said, "is one of the strongest of beasts, therefore slay one, cut off its head and fasten it to the door-post of your house, then bury the body carefully, and the strength of the buffalo will pass into the walls of the new Temple, leaving no room for your soul to enter therein. Thus you will be saved"—and he was. Probably the object of the head was to give the man something tangible which he could see and which would keep up his courage, for its presence would remind him of the vicarious sacrifice which he had offered in his own place.

But according to Ceremonial Magic besides men the unseen spirits can be coerced by the Magician. He acquires control over them by performing certain rites, which vary considerably, but one of the simplest forms is invoking the name of a superior Spirit or God. Moreover, if there is any object which the Magician thinks the spirits fear he utilises this in his ceremonies. A typical form of this kind of magic in the West is the use of Divine Names, such as Adonai, to coerce and terrify the evil spirits. This belief often gives rise to most incongruous ceremonies, wherein the Name of God is invoked, or at any rate uttered, in order to compel an evil spirit to do some perfectly

iniquitous thing for the benefit of the magician. It must be clearly understood that the spirits are not prayed to but are coerced, and in mediæval times we often find that if the Saints did not listen to prayers attempts were made to coerce them by threatening and insulting their statues. A typical instrument of Ceremonial Magic is the Sword of the Exorcist, such as that of the Great Bear in the Hung ritual, the power of which rests both in the material of which it is made, Peach wood, and in the emblem of Shang-ti, the Supreme King of the Gods, which is engraved on the blade.

THE MAGICIAN AS A BENEFACTOR.

But all magicians are not envisaged as scoundrels, and in China the exorcist is certainly regarded as a beneficent and useful minister, who by his superior art is able to assist the soul on its journey through the Underworld and to drive from its path evil spirits who might molest it. In the main the magical items still left in the Hung ritual are intended to be used for good, not evil, and since the candidates symbolise ghosts it is not surprising to find that similar precautions are taken to protect them as would be the case if they were really dead.

There is a side of the Hung ritual which may also be regarded to some extent as magical, or at any rate as occult, if we can scientifically distinguish between the two, namely, the elaborate ceremonies which take place at the Consecration of the Lodge, whose object is to bring into communion the living members present, the deceased brethren, the Ancestors, the Hierarchy of Good Spirits and the Gods themselves. The purpose is to create, as it were, an atmosphere, or an actual vehicle through which the Powers of Light may send down their forces and transmit them to those about to enter the Order. To some extent, indeed, the idea is similar to the sacramental doctrine met with in the West, although the analogy must not be pressed too far. The object, undoubtedly, is to obtain an influx of light and inspiration, together with an awakening and strengthening of the spiritual power in every man, which will enable him to advance a little way nearer towards perfection.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRECIOUS CENSER AND THE IMPERIAL PALLADIA.

FROM the Traditional History and from the Ceremony itself it is clear that the Hung Society has its own definite Palladia, under which heading may be included the Magic Censer, the Triangular Seal and the Magic Sword, of which the Censer is the most important. As we shall see later, this Censer seems to represent one of the ancient *Tripods*, which, numbering nine in all, constituted the ancient Palladia of the Chinese Empire.

Before discussing this aspect of our subject it seems desirable to define precisely what a Palladium is. The word is derived from *Palladium*, an archaic wooden image of Pallas Athena,[a] which was kept in the citadel at Troy and concerning which there was a prophecy that so long as the Trojans had it that city would never fall. Fable relates that Zeus threw it down from Heaven when Ilus was building Troy. It was probably some very ancient fetish, such as are common among many primitive races even to-day. In order to bring about the fall of Troy Odysseus and Diomedes stole it from the Capitol and deposited it in one of the Greek cities, but as several claimed to possess it, we cannot say with certainty to which it was carried by the Greeks. The Romans declared that there was a second Palladium, which Æneas carried with him to Italy, and this was kept in the Temple of Vesta at Rome.

THE WIDESPREAD SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PALLADIA.

The word has acquired a wider significance, however, and may now be defined as any object possession of which gives sovereign power to its holder. Among many races the title to the throne rests in some object or group of objects, and the successor of the previous Ruler is not securely established unless he has obtained control thereof. Indeed, in some cases possession of the Palladia is the sole title deed to rulership and without them the rightful heir is no better than a usurper. The exact form of the Palladia varies considerably and may even consist of the bones of the previous king, whilst the Royal regalia, crown, etc., are a very usual type. In the Malay Peninsular this belief in the importance of the Royal Palladia is widespread. The local Rajahs, or Kings, usually possess regalia which constitute magic talismans,

(a) Encycl. Brit. 11th ed. Vol. XX. p. 636.

and if the King should lose them he is also likely to lose his throne. In fact possession of the regalia is considered more important than legal right of succession.[a]

In the Southern Celebes the Princes rule by right of their regalia, and if a usurper can seize this, he, and not the heir, is regarded as the legal ruler. In this area the regalia is practically a fetish, for houses are built for it and sacrifices offered to it, while sometimes it is used for divination, which brings to mind the red flame which burst from the Hung Censer and which the Five Ancestors regarded as a favourable omen. These sacred objects are usually of vast antiquity and often consist of stones or pieces of wood of peculiar shape or colour, which, like the Trojan Palladium, are said to have fallen from Heaven. Usually the legend declares that the state was founded because of the discovery of one of these sacred objects. "The oldest Dynasties have the most regalia and the holiest regalia consist of relics of the bodies of former princes, which are kept in golden caskets wrapt in silk. At Paloppo, the capital of Loowoo, a kingdom on the South coast of Celebes, two tiny cannon . . . . are the regalia; their possession is supposed to render the town impregnable."[b] In Bima the chief Palladium is a sacred brown horse, a fact which suggests that the sacred white Elephant which in Siam, and formerly in Burma, was carefully housed and guarded by the king, had originally a similar magical property.

AFRICAN PALLADIA.

In ancient Egypt the two Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt were magical and in the case of the Crown of the God these were believed to confirm the Deity in the possession of his form, and even of his soul.[c] In modern Africa the regalia of many Chiefs is sacred and it is often said that a spirit, or spirits, inhabit it. Thus the King of Ife used to sacrifice to his crown,[d] and similar sacrifices were made to the throne of the King of Ashanti. Until the new King had been solemnly installed in this throne he had no legal power.[e] Among the Ewe tribe in Togoland the throne of their Chief was similarly sacred and had sacrifices made to it.[f]

Numerous other examples could be quoted from Africa, but perhaps some of the strangest relics are fragments of the body of the royal predecessor. Among the Masai, in East Africa, the skull of a dead King was carefully pre-

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(a) T. J. Newbold, *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*. II. 193.
W. W. Skeat, *Malay Magic*. Pp. 23—29.

(b) J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*. 3rd ed. I. 362 sq..

(c) A. Moret, *Le Rituel de culte divin journalies en Egypt*. (Paris 1902) pp. 94 sq..

(d) Sir Wm. MacGregor, "Lagos, Abeokuta, and the Alake," in the *Journal of the African Society*, No. 12 (July 1904) p. 472.

(e) E. Perregaux, *Chez les Achanti*, (Neuchatel 1906) p. 140.

(f) J. Spieth, *Die Ewe*. (Berlin 1906) pp. 76 sq..

served by his son and successor, for its possession confirmed him in power.[a] When the King of Abeokuta, in West Africa, died his head was delivered to his successor and became the latter's fetish.[b] In like manner the King of Cassange, in Angola, had to have possession of a box which contained teeth drawn from the mouths of his predecessors, and if he did not possess it he had no legal authority.[c]

In South Madagascar the Palladia of the Sakalava consisted of a collection of crocodile teeth into each of which had been inserted a vertebra from the neck, a nail and a lock of hair belonging to a previous king. Possession of these constituted the legal title to the throne, and if they were stolen from a reigning Chief, he immediately lost all authority and their new possessor was recognised in his stead. Knowing this, when the Hovas invaded the territory of this tribe they promptly seized the Palladia and thereby deprived the reigning Chief of all authority and support.[d]

In this historic incident we probably have the explanation of the success which followed the theft by the Greeks of the Palladium at Troy. Finding the Palladium of the King gone the Trojans probably lost all faith in him, if they did not actually abandon him, and consequently lost heart and offered but feeble resistance to the Greeks. But the Trojan Palladium was not the only Palladia of Classical times. The sceptre of Agamemnon was worshipped at Chæronea and sacrifices were offered to it,[e] while the ancient Scythian kings had as their Palladia a yoke, a plough, a battle axe and a cup, all of gold, which were said to have fallen from Heaven and to which sacrifices were annually offered.[f]

THE ROYAL PALLADIA OF ENGLAND.

Even in England there are traces of the belief that it was really the Royal Palladia that ruled and that he who obtained this became the legal successor, even though there might be someone else who apparently had a better claim. In early Norman times, at any rate, two facts are clear. Firstly, the peace of the realm was, literally, the King's Peace, and the instant the king died the King's Peace ceased. In other words, during the interregnum no one could be punished for robbing or killing. Secondly, the new King did not ascend the throne until he had been solemnly crowned, and hence it was of the utmost importance that he should be crowned as swiftly as possible. In consequence we find several examples of younger sons of the dead king superseding their elder

(a) Sir H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate*. (London 1902) II. 828.

(b) J. G. Frazer, *The Dying God*. 3rd ed. p. 203.

(c) F. T. Valdez, *Six Years of the Traveller's Life in Western Africa*. II. 161 sq..

(d) A. Grandidier, "Madagascar." *Bull. de la Societe de Georg*. (Paris) VIeme. Serie, III. (1872) p. 402 sq..

(e) Pausanias. IX. 40. 11 sq.

(f) Herodotus. IV. 5-7.

brothers by the simple process of seizing the crown and jewels, and hastening to Westminster to be crowned before the rightful heir could arrive upon the scene. It was thus that William Rufus, and after him Henry I., supplanted their elder brother Robert, who should have succeeded William the Conqueror. It is peculiarly significant that both these kings were able to rely on the help of the Anglo-Saxon peasantry against the Barons who supported Robert, who, according to the rules of strict inheritance, was the rightful King. It appears as though the Saxons, at that time a more backward and conservative race than the Normans, attached an overwhelming importance to the fact that the king had been duly crowned, and having to choose between two foreign rulers unhesitatingly supported the man who had the Royal Palladia. This supposition is the more probable in view of the fact that all through English History, right down to the time of the present King, the Rulers of England have been crowned with two crowns, of which the most important is not the personal crown of the King, which is remade each time to fit the incoming Monarch, but the reputed crown of Edward the Confessor. The actual crown of Edward the Confessor survived right through the centuries until the Civil War, when by order of Cromwell and Parliament the crown jewels were broken up and sold. But so strong was the tradition, that on the Restoration of Charles II. a replica was made and fortunately one or two of the minor articles of the regalia were recovered. Perhaps, however, the strongest proof of the importance of the Regalia was the series of events which took place in the reign of John. John himself commenced his reign by seizing the Regalia and thereby ousting his nephew Arthur, who had a better claim. John then proceeded to quarrel with both the Barons and the Church, and it was during the height of this quarrel that a certain mad monk started to prophecy that by a certain date John would lose his Crown. John locked the unfortunate man in prison, but for superstitious reasons took no further steps in the matter until after the fatal date had passed, then he executed the monk. But before it was reached John had surrendered to the Pope, and had received back his Crown as feudatory of the Papal See, therefore many of the Barons and the English people said that the Monk had indeed spoken truth, for John had really ceased to be an independent King. Supported by the Pope, who, as John's Overlord, was obliged by feudal custom to support his vassal, John now turned on the recalcitrant nobles and Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, and began slowly to wear them down in a series of battles, when an unexpected disaster befell him. While crossing the Wash at low tide the sea suddenly rose and overwhelmed his baggage train, engulfing the Crown Jewels, including his personal Crown. The historian then goes on to say that John took the loss of his jewels deeply to heart, and shortly after died of melancholy. His little son, Henry III, was promptly crowned King in his place, and the rebels soon submitted to him. Now why should John, who cared neither for God nor Devil, as he himself said, die of a broken heart because

he had lost a few jewels? He could easily have replaced them by the simple process of confiscating the property of the Barons, or the gold of the Jews, both of them policies he had successfully carried out on several previous occasions! The explanation of the enigma lies in the fact that in losing his Crown he had lost his right to the Kingdom, and the prophecy of the murdered monk had come true. It is clear, in fact, that immediately after the loss of the jewels one after another of his supporters had begun to abandon him. Indeed, the House of Plantagenet was only saved by the timely death of John, which enabled the Church, who had been opposed to him, to rally to the side of the boy King, who was duly crowned with the crown of Edward the Confessor. Politically, the small boy was, of course, under the control of able and conscientious Statesmen, who administered the realm during his minority and removed many of the grievances caused by the tyranny of John, but there can be little doubt that among the superstitious the fact that he, and not his French rival, had succeeded in being crowned first proved the deciding factor Before closing this section it is worth pointing out that on the death of Henry III for the first time the King's Peace did not end. Henry reigned for a very long period and during this time a number of able administrators arose, who looked forward with dread to the anarchy which always succeeded the death of the King. The situation was complicated by the fact that the heir, Edward, was away on a Crusade in Palestine, so the lawyers invented a legal fiction and declared that the new king commenced to reign the instant the breath was out of the body of the last king, and even before his coronation: a legal dictum embodied in the words, "The King is dead, long live the King." This marks the passing of the power of the old Palladia in England, but for all that some shadow of it still swayed popular imagination as late as the time of Henry VII, for when Richard III was killed in the Battle of Bosworth, in 1448, his crown rolled off into a furze bush, whereupon one of Henry's supporters picked it up and solemnly placed it on the head of Henry Tudor, at the same time proclaiming him Henry VII of England. It is certainly significant that Richard took his crown with him on to the actual battlefield; no doubt he was afraid that if he left it in London it might fall into the hands of his enemies.

THE CHINESE PALLADIA.

With facts like these before us it will come as no surprise to find that the Chinese also had their Imperial Palladia, the more so as they were near neighbours of the Scythians, whose Palladia we have already considered. The Chinese Palladia consisted of nine brazen tripods, almost certainly intended for burning incense, which are said to have been made by Yu, who is supposed to be the ninth Emperor of the legendary period, and probably represents a real man. He achieved great fame as an engineer, building canals and embankments in order to protect the country from drought and floods. He

THE ATTEMPTED RECOVERY OF THE LOST TRIPOD.

also divided the Empire into nine Provinces, and to celebrate that event made nine tripods out of copper which was sent from each of his nine Provinces to his Capital, near K'ai-feng Fu, in Honan. These were carefully preserved as Palladia for two thousand years. Yu was the founder of the Hsia Dynasty, the first historic, as distinct from legendary, Dynasty in China. It lasted from B.C. 2205 to 1767 and contributed eighteen rulers to China, being succeeded by the Shang Dynasty. In B.C. 1122, this was overthrown by the Chou Dynasty, which continued to hold sway until B.C. 255. From about B.C. 468, however, its power was largely nominal, and China was rent by the ambitions of various feudal princes and passed through a period of semi-anarchy. This only terminated at the fall of Tung Chou Chun and the accession of the Chin Dynasty.[a]

During nearly the whole of this long period the nine tripods were carefully guarded and passed from Emperor to Emperor, but, according to the *Shui Ching Chu*, in B.C. 333 they were "Lost in the Ssu River during the reign of Nsien Wang."[1] In the reign of Ch'iu Shih-huang, in B.C. 219, however, it was reported "that they had been seen there, and the Emperor sent an expedition to recover them, who searched a long time in vain, and when at last they fished out one of the number, a dragon suddenly appeared and bit the rope in two, so that it fell back into the river and was never seen again."[b]

No doubt the loss of the Imperial Palladia dealt the final blow to the prestige of the Chou Dynasty, but the new one having failed to recover them they ceased to influence Chinese Political History, although they were not forgotten in legend and in art. Fortunately there exists a bas-relief of the Han period, dating from about A.D. 147, which depicts the attempt of Chiu Shih-huang to recover the lost tripods,[c] which in its way is quite a vigorous piece of work and belongs to the same type of monument as that which depicts Mu Wang's visit to the Royal Mother of the West.

THE HUNG PALLADIA.

The Commissioners are watching the tripod which is being hauled to the surface by a rope, assisted by men in boats who are using poles. The dragon, which is somewhat small, is seen with a piece of the rope dangling from its mouth, while a second dragon is apparently enjoying the joke from the right bank. The sudden collapse of the men as the rope parts is graphically and humorously depicted. The shape of the tripod immediately brings to mind the censer illustrated opposite page 40 in volume I, and when we remember that the Precious Censer was supposed to have been picked out of the river by

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[1]Mencius lived during his reign.

(a)S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*. Vol. I., pp. 5 sq..

(b)*Ibid*. p. 30.

(c)See illus. op. p. 10.

the Five Ancestors we can hardly doubt that therein we have a reference to this lost Palladium of the Chinese Empire, despite the fact that it was supposed to be of white porcelain, and not of copper. In some of the rituals, moreover, emphasis is laid on the fact that it is a *three-legged censer*.

The fact that the Hung Censer is of porcelain supports the view that it had passed by oral tradition into the legends of the Hung Society, and that it was not deliberately imported by some Chinese intellectual, learned in the Classics, who would in that case have taken care that the censer was of copper. The theory that this censer is the last of the nine tripods is supported by the presence in the legend of the Imperial Jade Seal, for we are specifically told in the Classics that the Grandson of Ch'iu Shih-huang (the man who tried to recover the tripod) surrendered the jade seals of office to Liu Pang, the founder of the Han Dynasty, in B.C. 206. We thus see that the Five Founders had obtained an Imperial Jade Seal and the sacred tripod, or censer, and in view of the widespread belief among many races that possession of the Royal Palladia gave a legal right to the throne we may well believe that even if the more educated members of the Society knew that these relics were substitutes, or at best symbols, the rank and file may have been buoyed up with the belief that they, and not the hated Ts'ings, possessed the Palladia of China, and so ultimately the throne must pass into their hands.

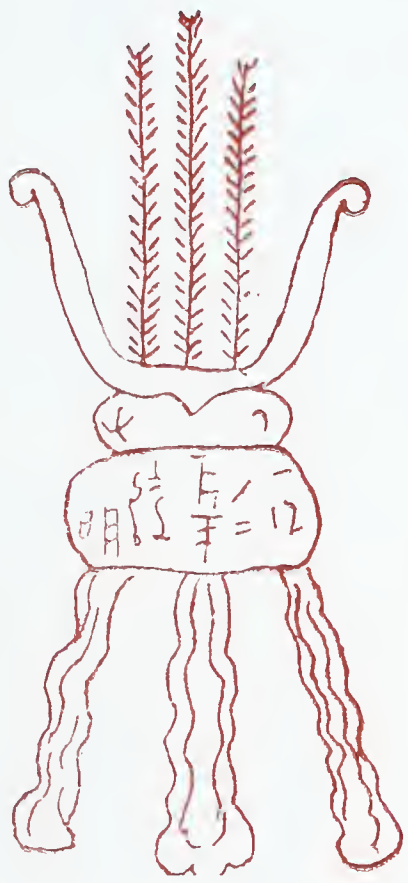
The fact that it is always called the *Precious*, or *Magic Censer* and that on one occasion at least it acted as an oracle, strongly supports the view set forth in this chapter, and unless it has some such significance it is difficult to understand the importance attached to it in Lodge, since in the ceremony itself it plays but an insignificant part. Furthermore, the statement that it weighs 5 pounds, 13 ounces, which means that it symbolises China, is intelligible on the assumption that it was the Palladia, and, like Royal Palladia elsewhere, really rules the State, its owners being merely its deputies. If this is not its original meaning the above explanation seems far-fetched indeed. Just as the nine tripods clearly symbolised the nine Provinces into which China was at that time divided, so the 13 ounces are said to represent the thirteen Provinces into which China is now divided.[1]

That there is also a deeper symbolical significance of a mystical nature is clear from the fact that the number three is attached both to the censer, which is three legged, and to the seal, which is triangular in shape. In addition to the basic idea of the Chinese Trinity, namely, Heaven, Earth and Man, there is probably a reference to the widespread belief that Royal Authority rests on three pillars, which in Mediæval Europe were described as, the Nobility, the Church and the Common People, and that the successful Monarch will hold the balance between the three classes. Although in China religion played as important a part as it did in the West, owing to the

[1]See Vol. I., p. 58, note 5.

fact that there were practically three co-equal religions the direct influence of what we may call the Church is not so noticeable as in the West, but the Chinese attach great importance to the Litterati, or educated class, who may well be regarded as representing in China that force which in the West was, in Mediæval days, centred in the monks and ecclesiastics of the Church.

The third article which constitutes part of the Palladia of the Hung Society is the *Magic Sword of the Great Bear*, but this deserves separate treatment and will therefore be considered in the next chapter.



THE PRECIOUS CENSER SHOWING THE THREE BLADES OF GRASS.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAGIC SWORD OF THE GREAT BEAR.

THE Magic Sword may also be regarded, in some measure as one of the Palladia of the Hung Society, but it appears to differ in one important respect from the Censer and the Seal. The latter represent the Palladia of the Emperors, whereas the Magic Sword is essentially the symbol of the Magician. It is possible to argue, of course, that in many countries kingship developed out of the magician, but we cannot be sure that this was so in China. In fact, so far as we can judge from her records, the Emperors who founded new Dynasties were usually successful warriors rather than magicians.

On the other hand, we know that the Hung Society has been considerably influenced by Taoists, whose exorcists still use a Magic Sword of the Great Bear when exorcising evil spirits, and, moreover, some versions of the Traditional History definitely refer to the use of a Magic Sword by the Abbot. In these versions, when he suspected the wine was poisoned, instead of pouring it into a rhinoceros horn cup, he plunged his *magic sword* into the wine and it at once began to fume. Under these circumstances we are justified in considering that it is the sword of the magician and has no connection with Imperial State swords, such as appear in some rites. The fact that it came out of a grave reminds us of similar famous swords brought from the graves of dead heroes, a theme which constantly recurs in Norse legends, but there is one peculiar feature which distinguishes this magic sword from those of the type usually found in graves. They were genuine swords made of metal, used during his life by some famous warrior, and buried with him at death, whereas this sword is of wood and therefore useless against ordinary mundane weapons unless it were truly magical.

THE USE OF WOOD FOR SWORDS.

The use of wood for swords, and other weapons, is today restricted to the most primitive races and is rapidly dying out, while so far back as we can trace Chinese history we find that these people knew how to work metals. We have definite historical records of the race stretching back to B.C.2000, or even earlier, and therefore the survival of wood for the magic sword indicates how conservative are beliefs associated with magic. On the other hand many races of Oceania, even the comparatively advanced Maoris, were using

INTERIOR OF A CHINESE TEMPLE.
(Showing the Three Buddhas).

wooden weapons at the time of their discovery by the white men, and it is just possible that this fact may have been known to some of the Chinese and have helped to keep alive the use of wood for magical purposes. The more probable explanation, however, is the survival of the widespread belief that metal is the Gift of the Gods of the Underworld, and unholy, hence it is not safe to employ it when trying to coerce the spirits who are supposed to dwell therein.

Moreover, there exists a striking analogy between this Hung Sword and the ancient Egyptian *Sakhmu*. This emblem was originally a wooden sword consisting of a blade of hard wood, sharpened on both sides, shaped square at the upper end and set into a round handle. It served both as a sabre and as a mace, stunning rather than cutting."[a] In primitive Egypt it became an emblem of the strong man and was buried with him in his tomb. Finally the "Sakhmu grew to be regarded as an object into which part of the personality of the deceased entered after death." In historic Egypt the Sakhmu became merely an honorific emblem, and was often carried by people of good family and by officials. It also continued to play a part in religious ceremonies. In earlier times the victim for sacrifice was slain with it, but later the man officiating merely raised it above the head of the victim and this was the signal for the butcher to cut its throat.

We thus see that the Sakhmu was buried in the grave of its owner and absorbed part of his personality, a fact which is of distinct interest to us here, seeing that the Hung Sword is supposed to have come out of the grave of the dead hero and its first use was to protect the monks, whilst it was wielded by two women closely related to the dead man.[b] We may therefore suspect that some part of the dead man was in the sword and helped the women to vanquish their foes. The fact that the Sakhmu was also an emblem of dignity and good position suggests that a like significance attached to the Hung Sword, but undoubtedly its chief purpose was, and is, magical, although apparently no attempt is made to produce practical magic with it during the ceremony. It is then rather as the *symbol* of the magician than for actual use that it appears in the Lodge. This being so we will now consider it from this standpoint and later go into the question of its association with the Great Bear, an important magical constellation, also represented by the seven lamps.

MAGIC SWORDS

The sword has been one of the important implements of magicians in all ages and climes. In ancient Egypt we find constant references to the use of the sword for invoking or expelling spirits.[c] The mediæval literature of Europe is full of such references, and in one of the lesser degrees or Orders of

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(a) Sir G. Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*. p. 93. Note 2.

(b) See Vol. I. p. 40.

(c) Sir G. Maspero, *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt*, p. 135. Note 1.

Clergy, the Exorcists, the candidate received a sword to symbolise the power conferred on him to expel evil spirits. It is, however, from the various books of magic that we obtain the fullest information. Therein elaborate regulations are laid down, and the proper prayers prescribed for the consecration of a magician's sword. These are usually of metal, but in addition he had to be armed with a *wooden staff* and a *wooden wand*. Thus the Hung sword appears to combine three instruments in one, and so a brief reference to all three seems desirable. The Triad also have their own staff, in the Red Staff, but today this seems to be merely a cudgel with no magical significance, although, of course, formerly things may have been different.

In the *Grimorium Verum*[a] the sword of the magician must be polished on the Day of Mercury, from the first to the third hour of the night. That intended for the Master should have the word *Elohim Jitor*[1] engraved on the blade from point to hilt. That of the first assistant should have "*Cardiel* upon the handle and upon the blade *Region*, proceeding from point to hilt. It should appear on both sides transversely, but add on the one Panoraim +, and on the other *Heomesim* +. On that of the Second Assistant should be written *Uriel*, *Saraion*, *Gamerin*+*Debaliin*, in the manner before described. The sword of the Third Assistant should bear the words, *Daniel*, *Imeton*, *Lamediin*+*Eradin*, and fit the same with a handle of white bone."

The *Key to Solomon* says:—

"The first sword should have on the pommel the name *Cardiel*, or *Gabriel*; on the lamen of the guard, *Region*; on the blade, *Panoraim Heamesim*. The second should have on the pommel the name *Auriel*; on the lamen of the guard, *Sarion*; on the blade, *Gamorin Debalin*. The third sword should have on the pommel the name, *Damiel* or *Raphael*, on the lamen of the guard, *Yemeton*: on the blade, *Lamedin Eradin*."[b]

This version is certainly a little more intelligible than the other instructions, for the three angels are the great Archangels who with Michael guard the four points of the compass. Probably Michael's name appeared on the pommel of the Master's sword, and if so we obtain a faint analogy with the four Generals who guard the four gates of the City of Willows in the Hung ritual.

To return to the swords. We find that the next procedure was to pronounce a strong conjuration, which ran as follows:—

"I conjure you, O Sword, by the three holy Names, Albrot, Abracadabra, Jeova![2] Be thou my fortress and defence against all enemies, visible and invisible, in every magical work. By the Holy Name Saday[3] which is great

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[1] i.e., Gibor.

[2] Namely, Jehovah.

[3] Namely, El Shadhai.

(a) A. E. Waite, *The Book of Black Magic*. London (1898), p. 130.

(b) A. E. Waite, *The Book of Black Magic*, p. 130. Note 3.

in power, and by those other names Cados, Cados, Cados,[1] Adonay, Eloy, Zena, Oth, Ochimanuel, the First and the Last, Wisdom, Way, Life, Virtue. Chief, Mouth, Speech, Splendour, Light, Sun, Fountain, Glory, Mountain, Vine, Gate, Stone, Staff, Priest, Immortal, Messiah, Sword, do thou rule in all my affairs and prevail in those things which oppose me. Amen."[(a)]

It will be noticed that this is not a prayer addressed to God under His various names but a conjuration addressed to the Sword, which supposedly must obey because, by knowing these names of power, the magician is able to impose his will on it.

THE STAFF AND ROD.

The *Grimorium Verum* lays it down that the magician must make two wands of wood which has never borne fruit. The "first must be cut at a single stroke from an elder tree on the day and in the hour of Mercury. The second should be hazel, free from bud, and cut in the Hour of the Sun. On the first should be engraved the seal of Frimost and on the second that of Klippoth."[(b)] Frimost is an evil spirit who has power over women and will help the magician to obtain control over them, while Klippoth is another of the thousands of evil spirits whose names fill the books of Mediæval Black Magic. When the seals have been engraved on the two rods they are consecrated by a prayer to "Adonay", surely one of the most striking examples of the illogicality of the human mind. In the Grand Grimoire "The Blasting Rod" must be cut with a knife used for sacrifice, still stained with the blood of the victim, and is consecrated by a prayer which refers to the rods of Jacob, of Moses and of the mighty Joshua. There are, however, certain interesting practical instructions, for the rod had to be shod at either end with a cap of steel which had been magnetized with a lode stone, and was then conjured, i.e., it was commanded to do certain things by the power of certain Divine names. We thus see that this rod had to be first consecrated and then conjured, while the cunning device of making it into a magnet no doubt enabled the operator to impose upon the ignorant and credulous and so enhance his own reputation.

Before leaving this subject it is worth mentioning that the pen and ink used by the Mediæval magician had to be specially prepared, consecrated and exorcised,[(c)] and the prayers used over these items in the Hung ceremony may therefore have been transmitted to them by the Taoist exorcists.

When we turn to China we find that the sword plays a very important part in Taoist exorcism, both as a weapon with which to expel the evil spirits and also as a method of self-inflicted penance on the exorcists. Not only do

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[1]Namely, Kadosh.

(a)A. E. Waite, *The Book of Black Magic*, p. 131.

(b)*Ibid*, p. 132.

(c)A. E. Waite, *The Book of Black Magic*, pp. 131—135.

they cut themselves with swords but often they are carried in procession through the streets seated on chairs made of swords. One of these chairs is in the British Museum and is a most fiendish invention. The frame is of wood but the spokes which form the back, the seat and the footstool are made of sword blades set on edge. The exorcist sits on this chair, sometimes for hours, while it is carried through the streets by members of the procession. His feet are bare and these, as well as his back and thighs, are considerably cut so that the blades are often covered with blood. Indeed the strange thing is that the semi-demented being is not more seriously injured than he is. Such scenes are fairly common in Singapore but they play no part in the Hung ceremonies. In addition to these real swords the exorcist has, as his emblem of office, a wooden sword on which are engraved the seven stars of the Great Bear. This is precisely like that used in the Triad ceremony, a fact which necessitates our turning to consider the importance of this constellation.

THE GREAT BEAR.

This Group of Stars was probably one of the first constellations to attract the attention of primitive man, partly on account of its striking form and even more because one of its stars serves as a pointer to the Pole Star, and so is of value to travellers both by sea and land. It is supposed to be referred to in Job,[a] and is certainly mentioned by Homer.[b] It is to the Greeks that it owes its names, *Arctos*, *The She Bear*, because it kept turning round the Pole Star, i.e. like a dancing bear. Among the Hindus its seven stars are said to represent the seven *Rishis* or Sages,[c] and probably this constellation was the origin of the sacredness attached to the number seven among so many nations, the present explanation being due to the process of symbolising which grows up as man evolves. The seven branch candlestick of the Jews was almost certainly originally, like the seven lamps of the Hung ritual, a representation of the Great Bear, while El Shadhai was by many believed to reside in the Pole Star round which these seven stars revolved. The seven branch candlestick was carried forward into the Mediæval Christian Church and a large and fine example of it still exists at Milan Cathedral.[d]

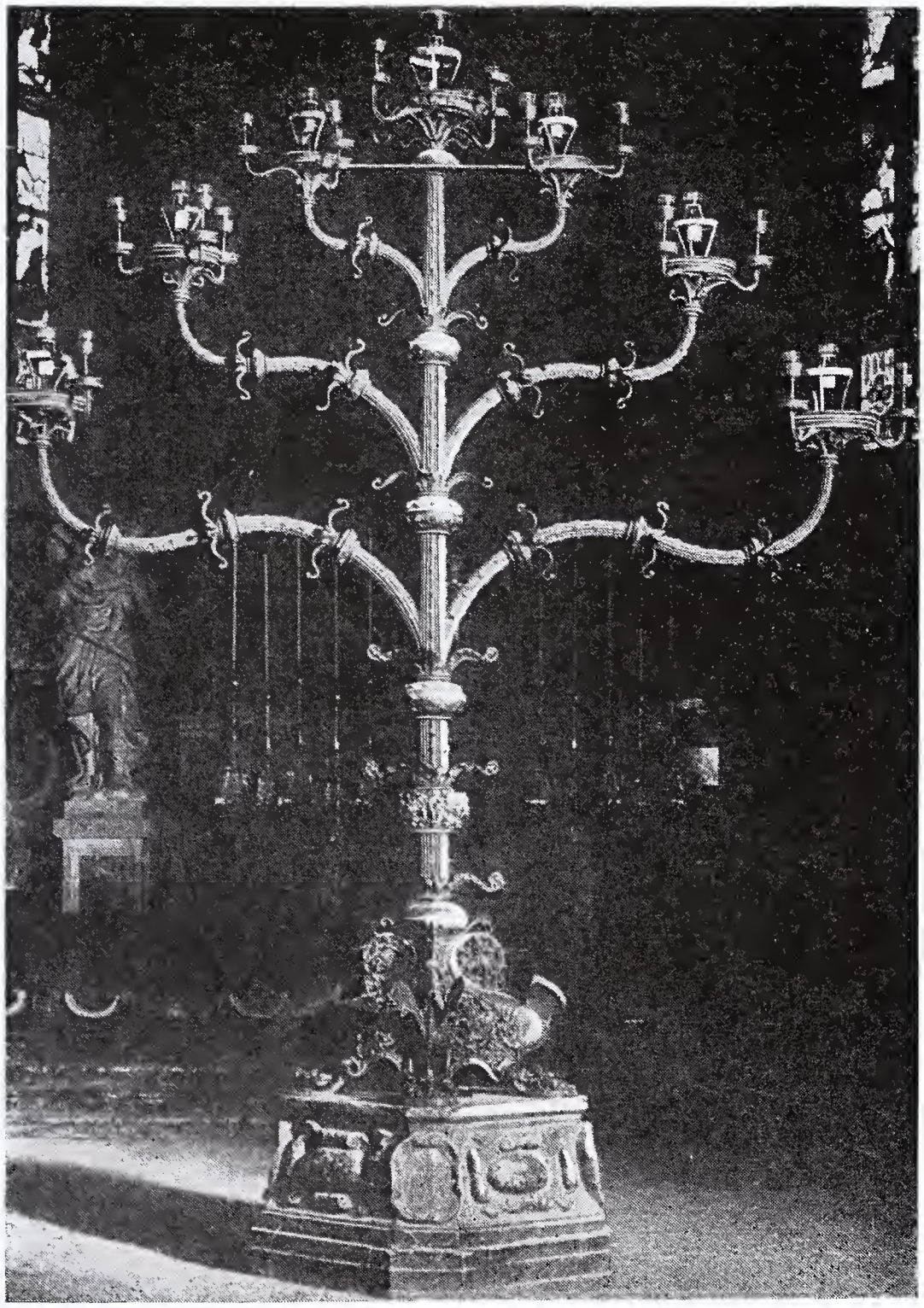
Naturally from such ideas would evolve the belief in seven angels, well known to us in the Apocalypse, and the seven Rishis of the Hindus. It is not safe, however, to assume that *all* sacred sevens evolved from the Great Bear for there was another important celestial seven, the Planets, which very early began to play their part in the mythology and astrology of early civilisations.

(a) Job. ix. 9; xxxviii. 32.

(b) Illiad. xviii. 487.

(c) Encyl, Brit. 11th ed., vol. 27, p. 803.

(d) See illus. opposite.



THE SEVEN BRANCH CANDLESTICK.
(From Milan Cathedral).

So far as the Chinese are concerned the Great Bear seems to have had a strange fascination for them from the earliest times. It was regarded by many as the dwelling place of Shang Ti and is constantly referred to, not only in the literature but also on the monuments of ancient China. In a bas-relief of the first century B.C. it appears on the left of the Moon, the separate stars being connected by lines on which Mr. Bushell makes these interesting comments:—[a] "The constellation of seven stars on the left of the Moon is the Great Bear which occupies a prominent position in the Taoist heaven as the seat of Shang Ti, round whom all the other Star-Gods circulate in homage; on another bas-relief it figures as the aerial throne of Shang Ti, who is actually represented as if appearing in answer to the prayers of a band of pilgrims, appealing for aid against the apparition of a comet, which is borne before him by an attendant sprite."

As the Great Bear was the dwelling place of the King of the Gods, it was natural that this emblem should appear on swords intended to exorcise evil spirits, for who more powerful than Shang Ti? Thus the seven stars correspond with the name of Adonai, which the Mediæval magician engraved on *his* sword. But we have still to consider the use of wood instead of metal. Peach wood is associated with the idea of long life, and even of immortality, since the fruit of the Tree of Life was believed to be a Peach, and we find in very early Chinese books references to the use of peach wood for spells. For example, in the seventeenth section of the *Pao P'oh-tsze*, by Koh Hung, careful instructions are laid down for writing spells in red cinnabar paint on planks of peach wood. This work is supposed to belong to the 4th century A.D.[b]

We thus see that the Sword of the Great Bear is part of the Palladia of the Magician. Without it he would be practically helpless against the evil spirits, but with this implement in his hand, whereon is engraved the emblem of Shang Ti, he claims to be able to expel evil spirits or bring them under subjection. Moreover, seeing the nature of the Hung ritual it is important to remember that at a funeral the exorcist has to drive out of the grave any evil spirits, and does so with his sword,[c] at the same time scattering imitation paper money.

(a) S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*, Vol. I., p. 28.

(b) J. J. M. de Groot, *Religious Systems of China*, Vol. vi., p. 1,035.

(c) *Ibid.*, Vol. I., pp. 209—210.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SCALES AND PAPER MONEY.

WEIGHING THE SOUL.

THE scales used in the Hung ceremony remind us of those employed by Anubis at the Weighing of Souls in the Judgment Hall of Osiris, but Christian tradition also sanctions their appearance. In mediæval lore, St. Michael seems to have had passed on to him the function of weighing the soul, and we constantly find him so depicted. For example, on the West front of the Church of St. Trophine, Arles, he is shown in the act of performing this task, while beneath him a foul demon is carrying away two of the rejected.[a] The date of the work is not later than 1100 A.D. and the Church shows clear traces of having been built by masons belonging to the Comacine Guild, in the form of their usual sign manual, the lion of Judah, the endless knot, and figures making signs, many similar to those used in the Triad Society. In the cloisters the stoning of St. Stephen is shown and two onlookers are making the so-called sign of fire of the Hung Society, thereby indicating their distress.[b]

Another place in which he is often depicted in his capacity as holder of the scales, is in illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages, a particularly good example being reproduced, (op. p. 114) the original of which is in the British Museum. A similar incident is depicted in the fresco at Chaldon, Surrey,[c] where we again find a demon waiting to carry off those who fail to pass the test. It is probably from this belief that there developed the idea which was embodied in the Statue of Justice, carved by classical sculptors, wherein a female figure with eyes bandaged, held in one hand a pair of scales and in the other a drawn sword. The meaning of the statue is obvious, although in *Utopia* Sir Thomas More lays it down that the figure of Justice should carry not only a sword to punish delinquents but a bag of gold with which to reward the virtuous. To this criticism it may be answered that a good man does not need to be rewarded for doing his duty, and if a man only behaves himself in order to obtain a reward, therein he fails to do his duty.

In our enquiry, however, the interesting problem is how the virtuous man proved his virtue by being weighed, and some persons have thought that he

(a) See illus. op. p. 64.

(b) See illus., op. p. 26.

(c) See Vol. II., op. p. 160.

did so if his pan of the scales dropped lower than the opposite one. In this interpretation they seem to be wrong, for we know from the Egyptian accounts that the soul was not weighed against its *evil deeds* but against its *good*. The underlying principle involved is that all the good in the man is taken away and placed in the one pan and the soul is placed in the other. If he has lived a gross, materialistic, evil life, the earthly elements in his soul will be gross, and therefore heavy. In that case he will be too material to enter Heaven and so his pan will outweigh his good deeds. Therefore to pass this test the pan of the soul must rise towards the beam, and this lightness of the soul obviously enables it to ascend easily to the mansions of bliss.

In the Hung ritual we are not told how the symbolical weighing is done, but that something representing the candidate is weighed seems probable. If so, it must obviously be something personal and light, for otherwise the candidate might fail to pass the test, since the scales, being jewellers' scales, are so flimsy that they would not bear a heavy weight. That the Society is careful to avoid being placed in so awkward a predicament, we may be sure, from what we know takes place in the case of similar tests in rites much nearer home, and the author ventures to hazard the suggestion that the candidate is represented by the small piece of hair which is ceremonially cut from his head earlier in the ceremony. In all magical ceremonies hair is regarded as peculiarly personal and as containing in some subtle way the life principle, and so from the magical and symbolical standpoint would admirably represent the individual himself. From the practical standpoint it would also be most convenient, for even the smallest weight used by a jeweller would easily outweigh a few human hairs.

For all that, these hairs may be considered to represent the heart, which in ancient Egypt was the organ weighed by Anubis, since in the Hung ritual we have repeated references to *true-hearted*, just as in the Book of the Dead the deceased repeatedly declares that he is *true of heart*. In any case, this weighing is another incident which proves that the candidate is supposed to be dead, a fact borne out by the presence of bundles of paper money near to the scales on the altar.

PAPER MONEY.

This paper money does not consist of real bank notes but of squares of paper, joined together into a packet or kind of book. The cover is red but the leaves inside are of thin white paper, on each of which is stuck a very small square of leaf silver, or even tinfoil. This is typical paper money, intended for the use of the dead in the next world, and vast quantities of it are burned at every funeral. In Rangoon, however, I have seen huge sheets of paper several feet square printed so as to resemble huge bank notes, and the figures printed on them represented millions of pounds! The close juxtaposition of this paper money and the scales suggests that the Chinese would agree with Sir

Thomas More that virtue should be rewarded as well as vice punished. For the latter, there is the magic sword of the Great Bear lying also on the altar, and so the money near by is clearly its counterpart.

This counterfeit money was gradually adopted in order to avoid not only the huge economic loss originally involved in burying real coins in the grave but also to remove the temptation to robbers to plunder the graves and so disturb the dead. Its satisfactory substitution is based on the theory that what the shades need is not the substance of this or any other article, but the form thereof, for as they themselves are immaterial forms, it is *forms* only that they require.

Vast quantities of paper money are used at a funeral and are disposed of in different ways. Some is placed loose in the coffin with the corpse; large quantities are burned and the ashes deposited in the coffin, and some is stored in small trunks of paper and bamboo, called treasure-chests. On either side of each "chest" stands a paper manikin, whose duty it is to carry the chest into the next world. These coolies are placed in charge of "a treasury officer," likewise made of paper, whose duty it will be to look after the dead man's monetary affairs in the next world.[a] The "Treasurer" has first been solemnly admonished as to his duties and, having been blessed, so that the "spirit may descend into him," a like process is gone through with the paper coolies. When the whole ceremony is ended, the Treasurer, coolies, treasure chests and money are burned and the ashes placed in the coffin. When the Dowager Empress of China, the last real ruler of the Manchu Dynasty, died a magnificent paper boat filled with paper figures of servants and Court attendants, and laden with paper furniture and food, was solemnly burnt in order that the Dowager Empress might have the use of these necessities in the next world.[b] These details are in striking analogy with the Egyptian use of Ushabti—made of clay, faience or wood—whose khas were thought to wait on the deceased Egyptian in the next world and, like their Egyptian equivalents, these Chinese puppets no doubt are substitutes for human slaves once sacrificed at the funeral of their owner.

DEBTS TO BE PAID IN THE UNDERWORLD.

Now these vast sums of money are required by the soul not merely for "current expenses" but in order to pay its debt. According to popular beliefs, each soul which is born has usually come from the Underworld and is only released therefrom by *Jemma*, Lord of the Underworld, on payment of a heavy ransom. Often the soul which desires to return has not sufficient money to pay this fee and so is compelled to borrow from richer ghosts. When it returns to Hades at death it will find its creditor awaiting it and demanding

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Vol. I., p. 78.

(b) Asia, July 1920, p. 596.

the return of the loan, probably plus interest. These creditors will be the more merciless since by now they, too, will be wanting to raise funds in order to escape from Jemma by paying their ransoms.

It is thus clear that every dutiful son will do his utmost to provide his deceased father with sufficient money to clear these old debts, at least, and most go much further and supply enough to enable him to ransom himself as soon as Jemma will permit it. Nor is the son left entirely in the dark, for long since learned men have discovered that the amount of ransom varies in different years of the duordinary cycle of animals. The lowest ransom is for those who were born in the Monkey year, when 60,000 coins will suffice, whereas the heaviest ransom is required for those born in the Ox year, when 320,000 coins will be necessary. If therefore his father was born in the "Ox year" the son must provide at least 320,000 paper cash, but usually he prefers to be well on the safe side and often burns three, five or even seven times the minimum. Fortunately, paper money is cheap, and for seven or eight English shillings a veritable fortune can be despatched to the next world.[a]

The above facts show that the paper money on the altar is a further hint that the candidates are dead, but the matter has been gone into at some length for two especial reasons. Firstly, in order to distinguish this paper money from the three metal Hung cash. These represent the fee which the dead man must pay for admission to the underworld, for apparently the guardian of the threshold, unlike Jemma, is not content with paper substitutes. Secondly, because there seems to be a definite connection between the scales and this money, which suggests that it is a reward for trusty and loyal Hung brethren, whereas the seven-starred sword awaits those whom the scales prove to be traitors.

The presence of this grave money explains a peculiar custom which exists among members of the Hung Society. After initiation the candidates are taught by the preceptor how to fold paper so as to form various articles. Among these are a paper jacket, a pair of trousers, a table and a boat. At first sight this instruction seems somewhat pointless for grown men, although useful when employed in an elementary school to teach small children manual dexterity. It is evident, however, that the original object was to construct paper clothes, etc., for the dead, for in addition to paper money, paper clothes, models of furniture and the like, are burned so that their form may be used by the dead in the next world.

Whether such paper models were kept and burned at the funeral of brothers, we cannot definitely say, but the retention of this training is a piece of symbolism of considerable importance, for it is further evidence that the whole ceremony represents Death and Life beyond the Grave. It will be noticed that the candidate does not make these articles until after he has been fully initiated,

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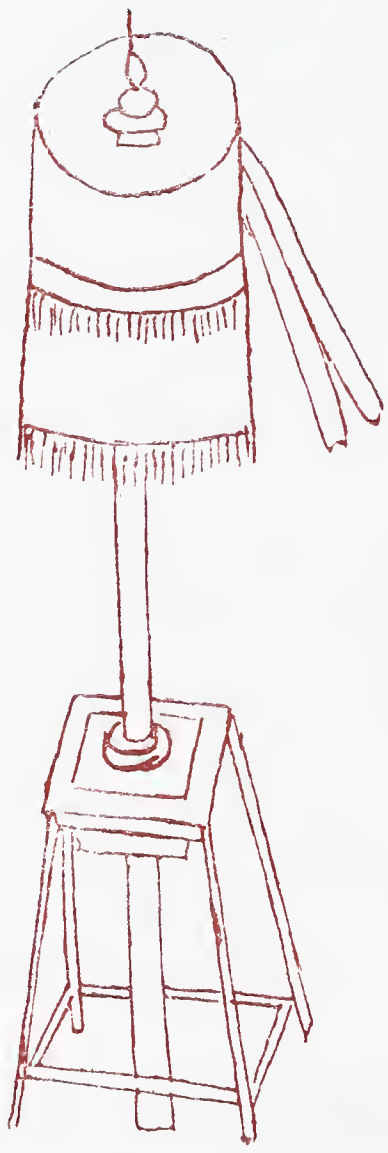
(a) J. J. M. de Groot, ibid, Vol. I., p. 81,

and so they must be made for those who succeed him. This implies that the articles are made by the brethren for each candidate who symbolically dies; they thus stand in the position of his relations.

Probably to-day the main reason why the instruction is given is in order to enable a brother to prove himself. Indeed, two cloths which fell into Mr. Stirling's hands are obviously meant merely for this purpose. When unwrapped, they appear to be covered with a mass of meaningless marks, but when correctly folded in a peculiar manner they prove to be a series of sentences relating to the Hung Society. The unravelling of this puzzle took Mr. Stirling and his wife many hours' careful study. It may be added that among the poorer class Chinese in Singapore, instead of burning elaborate and accurate paper models of clothes it is often customary to burn sheets of paper on which have been printed pictures of the articles required by the dead, such as coats, boots, etc..



THE HUNG "IMPERIAL" UMBRELLA.

CHAPTER V.

THE SACRED TREES OF THE HUNG SOCIETY.

THE tree plays a most important part in the religious observances of most primitive, and of many fairly civilised, races, and therefore it is not surprising to find traces of a Tree Cult in the Hung Society. In order to understand the ceremony it is necessary to have at least a rudimentary knowledge of the peculiar properties and beliefs attached by the Chinese to certain trees, such as the peach, the pine or fir, and the cypress. Moreover, it will be of real assistance in this investigation if we compare the Chinese Tree Cult with similar Cults elsewhere, since often these will help to elucidate the reasons which underlie various Chinese superstitions and beliefs.

THE PEACH TREE.

The obvious starting point in such a piece of research is the Peach Tree, which has been regarded by the Chinese as a symbol of long life for as far back in their history as we can trace any definite records. In the *Han Wu-te nei ch'wen*, or, *Traditions Concerning the Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty*, we are told that "Wang Mu, the Royal Mother of the West, presented to Wu, as a reward for his having journeyed to her Paradise, peaches from her sacred peach tree. She also informed him that this tree bore fruit only once in three thousand years." Again the *Shih i Ki*, or, *Record of Forgotten Matters*, a work of the 4th or 5th centuries, A.D., informs us that in the *Eastern Desert* there is a Peach Tree in the East, which is five hundred feet high, whose leaves are eight feet long, and whose fruit are three feet in length. From the stones of these fruit could be decocted the Elixir of Life.[a] It is clear that this tree was a Sacred Cosmic Tree, like Yggdrasil among the Norse, and had little in common with its feeble earthly representative, the ordinary Peach Tree. It belongs to the realm of mythology, but for all that there are not lacking certain facts which may explain why a tree which in itself does not possess long life, therein differing markedly from our sacred oaks of the West, should yet be regarded as an emblem of Long Life, and the Cosmic Tree be confounded with it, receiving even its name.

Firstly, the tree itself, in Spring covered with beautiful blossoms, may well have been regarded as a symbol of the resurrection. The dainty blossoms

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, I., 56.

in their abundance form a cloud of rosy pink, like the first faint blush of the dawn. Coming after a long period of apparent deadness, such a sight could hardly fail to impress the mind of the primitive race out of which developed the Chinese. In short, the Peach would fill the place held by the May Tree in England, and indicate that Spring had indeed come. The fact that the fruit of this tree was exceedingly pleasant to eat would help to establish its reputation.

Secondly, the stones, embedded in an exceedingly soft body, are extraordinarily hard, and will resist pressure or blows from a hammer under which most kernels would swiftly break. The very contradiction between the soft pulpy body of the fruit, liable to damage or injury from the slightest pressure, and the hard, yet beautiful, stone inside would naturally lead to an allegory of man, whose body perishes so easily but whose soul is immortal.

Finally, in the passage referred to from the *Shih i Ki* we have probably the key to the mystery. From the Peach Stone can be extracted an oil which contains a minute quantity of prussic acid, and this discovery was no doubt made by early Chinese alchemists. Although in a concentrated form prussic acid is a deadly poison, and so in direct antithesis to the Elixir of Life, if taken in small quantities it has a tonic effect which may easily have been noticed by the early experimenters who, lacking the exact scientific knowledge of the modern chemist, would jump to the conclusion that this effect might lead to eternal youth if only they could find, instead of a common Peach Tree, the ideal one of their dreams,—the Cosmic Tree of the World.

This ideal Peach Tree is constantly represented in Taoist pictures of the Western Paradise, often near to a bridge, and in the example reproduced in Volume II[(a)] it will be discerned as growing on a headland overhanging the water. In the *Willow Pattern Plate* it appears near the Pavilion, and there and in the Taoist silk picture it is closely associated with pine trees, to which we shall refer later. In the Triad ritual we are told that the Peach Tree is on the Island and apparently near the bridge, further, after crossing the bridge we are informed that the candidate purchases peaches from an old man in the Market Place of Universal Peace. From these facts it would seem as if for some reason the Peach Tree is always associated with water and stands near to a place of crossing, and therefore corresponds in some ways with an ear of corn, which in many rites is associated with water and also with crossing that water.[1] Since bread and water among many races represent the bare necessities without which life cannot be sustained, we perceive that the Chinese Peach also symbolises the fruits of the soil, upon whose continual production human life depends.

Since, however, in China rice really represents the "Staff of Life," we might

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[1]In Mexico Quetzacoatl is depicted as being wounded near to a stream or fall of water, and he is shown wearing corn (Maize) in his head-dress.

[(a)]Vol. II. Illus., op. p. 34.

THE STONING OF ST. STEPHEN.
(St. Trophime's Church, Arles).

have expected that it, and not a Peach, would form the symbol for plenty, namely, that which alone is really necessary to man for physical existence, and to some extent the 108 plants of rice which the candidate is supposed to pluck by the Water of the Three Rivers does correspond to this idea. It will be remembered that the Hung ship is supposed to pause at a ravine, named, *Khu Chu*, and the Candidate there lands and plucks 108 plants of rice.[a] This being so it appears strange that the Peach should occur also in such a position as to imply that it represents *Plenty*.

The explanation probably lies in the fact that the Hung ritual is very old and contains elements drawn from various strata of religious beliefs. Again and again we come across traces of Buddhist and Taoist conceptions, often conflicting with each other, while in addition there seem to be elements which have come down from a period in Chinese history anterior to the rise of either Buddhism or Taoism. I would suggest that the Rice represents a very ancient symbol, and that the Peach is Taoist. In course of time the Rice would come to stand for an emblem of earthly, and the Peach, of Spiritual, food. Once the Peach became associated with the belief in the Elixir of Life it would tend more and more to be regarded as the food of Heaven, and absorb into itself the characteristics of other food symbols, such as the pomegranate eaten by Persephone in Hades. That the peaches sold by the Old Man do represent the food of the Underworld, which once eaten prevents any return to life on earth, is clear, and that the peach itself is the symbol of long, and so of everlasting, life is acknowledged by all Chinese authorities. Therefore we may compare it with the Bread of Life eaten by the Blessed Dead in the Egyptian Elysian Fields, while the rice on the banks of the river has come to represent the more physical food of mortal life. In this connection it must be remembered that the Chinese still offer physical food to the dead, believing that the Ghosts require it, and this food must be distinguished from the food of Everlasting Life obtained when the Spirits enter Heaven.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PEACH WOOD.

As not only the fruit but the wood of the tree is constantly referred to in the ritual, it now seems desirable to turn our attention to the magical properties which are supposed to be attached to Peach wood. We are carefully told that the Magic Sword was of Peach wood,[b] and the interesting detail is added that it was a *Sword of Justice*. We are also informed that three kinds of deck boards were used on the Hung Boat, on the left, *peach wood*, on the right, plum wood, and in the middle, red wood.[c] As the Peach wood sword was a Sword of Justice we may suspect that this side of the ship represents the mystic Path

(a) See Vol. II., p. 86.
(b) Vol. I., p. 39.
(c) Vol. I., p. 84.

of Severity, whereas the Plum wood boards represent the Path of Mercy and the red wood stands for the Middle Path, often called in the West, the Path of Benignity, which lies between these two.

The Sword, of itself, is among most races an emblem of justice, but from many Chinese references it is clear that Peach wood is especially efficacious in warding off all evil, or in subduing it. This is probably because as the Tree of Eternal Life it was considered to be strongly endowed with the Heavenly, or Yang, principle. We find that Swords, or even mere planks of peach wood, were, and still are, used by exorcists to expel evil spirits, and in the early records these men played a prominent part in the funeral ceremonies. Their intervention was intended not only to protect the dead man from the attacks of evil spirits, but also to ward off from the mourners the evil and polluting influence of the Yin principle, which was associated with death.

In Chapter XII of the *Li Ki*, it is written, "When a Ruler goes to the funeral rites of a Minister, he has with him a Wu (exorcist) and an invoker, holding respectively a piece of peach wood and reeds." "The Peach Tree", says Ching Khang-ch'ing,[1] "is dreaded by ghosts and bundles of reeds are available for sweeping away inauspicious things."[(a)] Again we are informed by a Chinese Sage of the 8th century that, "those who are constantly under the influence of spectres and spirits should make a decoction of (coffin) wood in water and wine, adding a *branch of a Peach Tree* growing on the East side of the trunk, and they will vomit them out."[(b)] We have thus a further proof that Peach wood is endowed with the Yang principle and forms effective "magic" against the Powers of Evil. It may be added that coffins are usually made of fir or cypress, which are likewise endowed with the Yang principle, and explains why they are so used, it being thought that they will strengthen with Yang the soul of the deceased. As fir and cypress also occur in the Hung ritual we shall have to revert to this point shortly.

We see, therefore, that while the Peach is the symbol of immortality it is also an emblem of justice and of retribution. It is dreaded by the Powers of Evil, who are driven away by it, and so we can readily understand why the Peach Fruit in the Market, which gives immortality to the trusty and true, destroys traitors. It was no doubt for a like reason that Kwan Ti and his two friends swore their oath of brotherhood under its branches, and hence why there is always a "Peach Tree" on the altar before which the Hung candidate takes his obligation.[(c)] The Peach Tree here is a promise of reward, a witness, and a warning of retribution. Those who remain true to their oaths will eat of its fruit in Paradise, but those who prove false will perish on eating

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[1] A famous Chinese commentator who lived in the 2nd century, A.D.

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Vol. I., p. 41.

(b) Ibid, Vol. I., p. 328.

(c) See Vol. I., pp. 164 and 167.

that which should have given them immortality. The strong Yang principle of Heaven and Life would enter into them and, conflicting with the evil Yin principle, would consume and destroy it and them together. Herein it combines the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge of the Western World, and reveals thereby its Cosmic significance, for by disobedience to the Orders of God, Adam and Eve were turned into traitors and the Tree of Knowledge became the Tree of Death.

FIR AND CYPRESS.

Let us now turn to the fir and cypress grove entered by the mysterious woman who rode a white horse,[(a)] concerning which we are further told:—

When a withered tree meets spring it sprouts once more,
When the eight Sages crossed the sea they put golden flowers in their hair,
The Princess rides on horseback along the road;
The fir and cypress groves are *our home*.

The first line clearly suggests the rebirth of the soul out of the dead body, and the second refers to crossing the Great Sea, namely, the Waters of Death, to Paradise. Further proof of this contention will be found in the statement that the Immortals wore golden flowers in their hair, for in China when a woman is buried her head is adorned with a kind of bonnet, or crown, called *The Phoenix Cap*,[1] made of "a quarter globe of thin, twisted wire, entirely covered on the outside by numerous leaves, butterflies, *flowers*, and so on, all made of thin *gilt*, copper plate. Further a broad band of red silk is also tied round the head, to which are attached copper images of the eight immortals."[(b)] We thus see that not only are the gilt, golden flowers a sign that death has come, but that the Eight Immortals are also an integral part of the funeral ceremonies. We further see that the red kerchief worn by the candidates and officers is really a grave-cloth, just as their white robes imply not only mourning but the habiliments of the dead.

All these funeral rites and references are included in a verse which speaks of the resurrection and deals with a grove of firs and cypress, which the candidate admits is his home, it will therefore hardly come as a surprise to find that coffins in China should be made of fir or cypress.[(c)] This is because they are supposed to be full of vitality and so will strengthen the corpse. The fact that both trees are evergreen and so do not seem to die in Autumn, as do many other trees, no doubt largely explains this belief, and it is significant that the Cypress is regularly planted in graveyards in countries which border the

[1]Compare with the Five Phoenix Hill in which Yan Wung Lung was buried. The Phoenix is an emblem of the Resurrection.

(a)Vol. I., p. 81.

(b)J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Vol. I., p. 54.

(c)Ibid., Vol. I., p. 294.

Mediterranean. To-day this custom is sometimes explained on the grounds that they are sombre and mournful in colour, but it is more probable that their connection with death was due originally to a similar belief to that held by the Chinese, for we know that this association has existed since the Classical period. These trees resist the ravages of weather, time and insects as do few other species, and a famous Chinese writer Chwang-Tsze, says:—"Pines and cypresses alone on this earth are endowed with life in the midst of Winter as well as in the Summer, for they are evergreen." Further, many species of these trees do live to a great age, and Chinese history mentions kinds which were supposed to be a thousand years old. One writer, indeed, says, "branches of Pines which are three thousand years old have underneath the bark accumulations of resin in the shape of dragons, which, if pounded and consumed in a quantity of full ten pounds, will enable a man to live five hundred years."[(a)] We are even told that the Emperor Wu of the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 684—705) invested three old cypresses of the Thien Fung Monastery with the dignity of court officials, and that their foliage covered over a hundred paces of ground.

The alchemists, moreover, were so convinced of the life-giving properties of pines and cypresses that they compounded drugs from their sap, and resin, [1] and related tales of how Sages by so doing had prolonged their lives by hundreds of years. In short, the Chinese are convinced that by burying their dead in coffins made of these woods they will both preserve the body from premature decay and, even more important, strengthen the soul and aid it to rise from the grave to immortality. Therefore when the Hung candidate says that the fir and cypress grove is his home, he clearly indicates that he is dead and his body is in the coffin. We are at once reminded of the Egyptian saying, "their houses they called hostelries but their tombs everlasting habitations." We also notice that this meeting with the Eight Immortals and then with the Princess, who rode on a white horse, (the colour of mourning) was before the candidate had symbolically reached the Black Dragon Mountain, which represents the Mountain of Sunset. Thus it would appear as if it was at this point that he passed from the land of the living. As the horse on which the Princess rode was white we cannot help connecting it with the white horse which had previously been sacrificed. In the chapter on that sacrifice it is suggested that the horse represents the candidate, and if so we herein have a description of the candidate led into the grave by the *Queen of Heaven*. His subsequent adventures would therefore represent the journey of his soul from the coffin through the Underworld to Heaven, a fact we have already adduced for other reasons.

Before leaving this subject it is well to draw attention to the fact that

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[1] In Europe the scent of pines is said to be health-giving and Bournemouth's popularity as a health resort is partly due to the presence of its pine woods.

(a) Ibid., Vol. I., p. 295.

before a corpse is buried in China *three* coins must be placed in its mouth[a] and in the ritual we learn that the candidate is given *three* Cash, which are clearly a passing fee for the mysterious bridge which his soul will have to cross.[1] As to the tree itself, we find pines constantly represented in the pictures of the Taoists and on the Willow Pattern Plate, in both of which it is in close proximity to the Peach Tree of Immortality. Thus while the Peach Tree bespeaks the promise of Everlasting Life, the Pine and Cypress, although in one sense representing death, in another may be regarded as the means whereby the soul is strengthened, and so helped to achieve that immortality which is symbolically represented by the eating of Peaches in the Market Place of Universal Peace.

THE MULBERRY TREE.

There is, however, another tree which is mentioned in the Hung ritual, namely, the mulberry, which is also associated with funeral rites, for often the lid of the coffin is made of mulberry wood. But this practice does not seem to meet with the approval of the orthodox as the following story shows:—

A man who had revived after death related that "while under the ground, I saw some men enlisting spectres. A spectre said to them 'I must be exempt from enlistment for I belong to a Cypress coffin.' But the Chieftain retorted: 'Your coffin is in fact of cypress wood, but the lid is of mulberry timber,' and he was not exempted."

When this story became known there was a great run on cypress wood and the price rose severely, in consequence many shrewd persons said that the tale had been invented by the dealers in that wood.[b] We see, therefore, that mulberry wood was by many deemed sufficiently good for the lids, although careful people thought it wise to have *every* part of the coffin made of cypress. There was, however, one important appurtenance of death which had to be made of mulberry wood, and that was the pin for the hair knot of the deceased. This was four inches long,[c] and so when we read in the Hung ritual that the Fairy, Hian-chu-lung, was "gathering mulberry flowers"[d] we cannot help suspecting that these were the mulberry pins intended for the corpse. The candidate meets this Fairy immediately after he has described how the *Princess on the white horse* had entered a grove of fir and cypress (i.e. the coffin). We have already seen that artificial flowers were placed on the head of the corpse, and so we shall probably not be far wrong if we regard this as another

[1] To this day devout Roman Catholics are always buried with coins in their hands.

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, Ibid., Vol. I., p. 278.

(b) Ibid., Vol. II., p. 129.

(c) J. J. M. de Groot, Ibid., Vol. I., p. 332.

(d) *The Hung Society*, Vol. I., p. 82.

detail of the funeral ceremonies, although there may be further esoteric meanings in the incident.

All these sacred trees bear witness to a time when Tree worship played a more important part in the religious life of China than it does today. Most primitive races seem to pay great reverence to trees, or to the spirits which are supposed to inhabit them, and they usually speak of a vast Cosmic Tree. As already pointed out, among the Chinese this Cosmic tree is still remembered, and often, though not always, is described as a Peach. One interesting series of legends seem to link it with the acacia tree, which stood at the Western Gate of the World in Egypt, at the spot where the Sun and the Souls which accompanied it entered the Underworld. As in Volume II we have met with similar trees among many Savage races, such as those in the Pacific, it will be worth while to study the legend of its Chinese equivalent which, however, is by the Eastern, and not by the Western Gate of the World.

THE MOUTH OF THE TIGER.

Wang Ch'ung, a writer of the first century A.D., is our earliest authority for the legend, which is said to explain, in part, why peach wood is so universally employed for expelling evil spirits. "Among mankind of most remote antiquity there were Shen-tu and Yuh-lei, two brothers, endowed by nature with the power of capturing spectres. They dwelt in the *mountain*, or land of, Tu-shoh, in the Eastern Sea. Standing under a *peach tree*, they examined hundreds of spectres, and those which without regard to the *li*, or laws and principles of Tao, wantonly had inflicted misfortune on men, were bound with cords of reeds or rushes by Shen-tu and Yuh-lei and *thrown as food to a tiger*. Hence it is that district magistrates cut peach wood into human images and place them besides their doors, and that they *paint tigers* and affix them to the central gate posts."[a] The same authority in another passage informs us that the foliage of this peach tree covered three thousand miles, and that the North Eastern side of its branches was called the *Gate of Spectres*. He also makes it clear that these two men were at this spot to act as official examiners of the spectres and to sort out the evil from the law-abiding.

Now this legend throws additional light, not only on the Peach Tree in its aspect of the Cosmic Tree, but also on several small details in the Hung ritual. Firstly, let us dispose of the Tiger. It will be remembered that the names of candidates are written on a board "*inside the mouth of a Tiger*."[b] This is supposed to stand just outside the East Gate of the City of Willows. On the altar at which the candidates take their oaths stands a Peach tree,[c] and on either side of the altar are the Master and the White Fan, or Instructor. Therefore it would seem that this symbolically means that the candidates

(a)J. J. M. de Groot, Ibid., Vol. II., pp. 953-4.
(b)See Vol. I. Frontis., also illus., op. p. 24 and Vol. III. p. 37.
(c)Vol. I., p. 167.

represent the spirits passing in review before the mythical examiners, and we may assume that by placing their names in the Mouth of the Tiger the Hung Officers imply that those who are good cannot be harmed by that animal, which would, however, destroy them if judged evil by the two examiners, namely, the Master and the Instructor. If this be so we have a further parallel with the trial in the Egyptian Tuat, where a monster waits to devour those who fail to pass the weighing. We must also note that the Hung trial takes place under a Peach Tree and so indicates that the tree itself inspires the examiners to decide aright.

Furthermore, this legend throws light on a curious phrase which occurs in some versions of the Traditional History, although not found in others which I have examined, and which for this reason is not printed in the version given in Volume I. The phrase is, "*Having thus escaped the Tiger's mouth*[1] the Monks continued their flight, and in due course reached the Temple of Kao Chai."[(a)] Now this passage occurs just after the *two genii* had appeared and made the bridge by which they escaped, and although a number of subsidiary adventures occurred between the time when they first reached the Temple of Kao Chai and their return thither to take the oath of blood brotherhood, it is clear from Schlegel that it was at this very spot, Kao-Chai, which is also called the Red Flower Pavilion, that they took their oath. We are also told that this oath was in imitation of that taken by Kwan Ti and his two friends in a *Peach* Garden. Moreover, among the adventures which occur in the Traditional History between the point where they "escaped the mouth of the tiger" and the taking of their oath, is the finding of the Peach wood sword.

This concatenation of incidents connected with the Peach Tree and the legend related by Wang Ch'ung cannot be accidental, it is far too marked in character, and so we have a definite piece of evidence in support of the view that the Five Founders were actually dead ere ever they started to found the Hung Society. While we must admit that the Traditional History is not so easy to follow as is the journey of the Vanguard—it has probably become overlaid with Political matter—yet this detail will help us to perceive its true meaning. It is possible that this part deals with the gathering of the dead previous to their setting out to join the Sun on its journey Westward. It will be remembered that in Volume II., page 71, we drew attention to the fact that the beliefs of the Hervey Islanders throw considerable light on the opening questions of the Master and Vanguard, and suggested that the souls had first to join the Sun and then follow it to the West in order to enter the Underworld. As the Peach Tree and the two examiners in the legend of Wang Ch'ung are in the *East*, the above facts are certainly significant.

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[1]Compare this Tiger with the savage pig in Central Melanesia, who is supposed to devour all who, having failed to plant pandamus trees, have no tree up which to climb to safety. See Vol. II, p. 59.

(a)Vol. I., p. 139.

SACRED TREES OF OTHER LANDS.

Before leaving the subject of the Cosmic Tree it may be worth while to compare it briefly with other Cosmic, or at least Sacred, Trees, venerated in different parts of the world. The Aryan Races appear to have been great Tree Worshippers, and among many of them it was the Oak which was especially venerated. That the Druids worshipped the Oak[a] is known to all, but the Germans[b] and Slavs[c] did so likewise. Other trees were also sacred, and in this work it is particularly interesting to find that at the Sanctuary of Æsculapius at Cos no one was permitted to cut down any of the cypress trees, and if anyone did so he was fined a thousand drachma.[d] In this case we have a close analogy with the Chinese veneration for the cypress, although in their case it led directly to the destruction of the trees, for since Æsculapius was the God of Healing, we can hardly doubt that his cypresses were considered to be full of vital, health-giving force, just because they were hardy and evergreen. Moreover, we find that the fir also has been regarded as sacred by certain European races, particularly the Finns, who near Kuopio had a sacred grove of firs, where the people offered sacrifices up to 1650, when it was cut down by orders of the local pastor. Even still, however, sacrifices are offered to particular fir trees, and often these consist of the skull of a bear nailed to the tree, with the apparent object of securing success to a hunter.[e]

The underlying principle of this veneration for trees seems to be the belief that they have souls, and that the tree spirits may inflict injury on anyone who hurts them, and conversely bestow blessings on those who worship them. Among the more primitive races all trees and plants are thought to possess such souls, and therefore when it is necessary to cut down a tree, or pluck a plant, elaborate rites are performed to protect the depredator. In the Yasawu islands of Fiji, for example, a man dare not eat a cocoa-nut until he has asked the tree's permission, which he does by saying, "May I eat you, my Chief?" and numerous other examples could be quoted.[f]

In course of time, however, this veneration would tend to be limited to particularly large trees, to one which was remarkable in some way, or at least to especially important species. To the Buddhists the most sacred tree in all the world is the Sacred Bo Tree at Anuradhapura, Ceylon, to which pilgrims come yearly from every Buddhist country. Mahinda, who came from India to convert Ceylon to Buddhism, brought with him a bough, torn from the tree at Budh Gaya under which Buddha sat when he gained enlightenment, and

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(a) Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XVI., 249 sq..

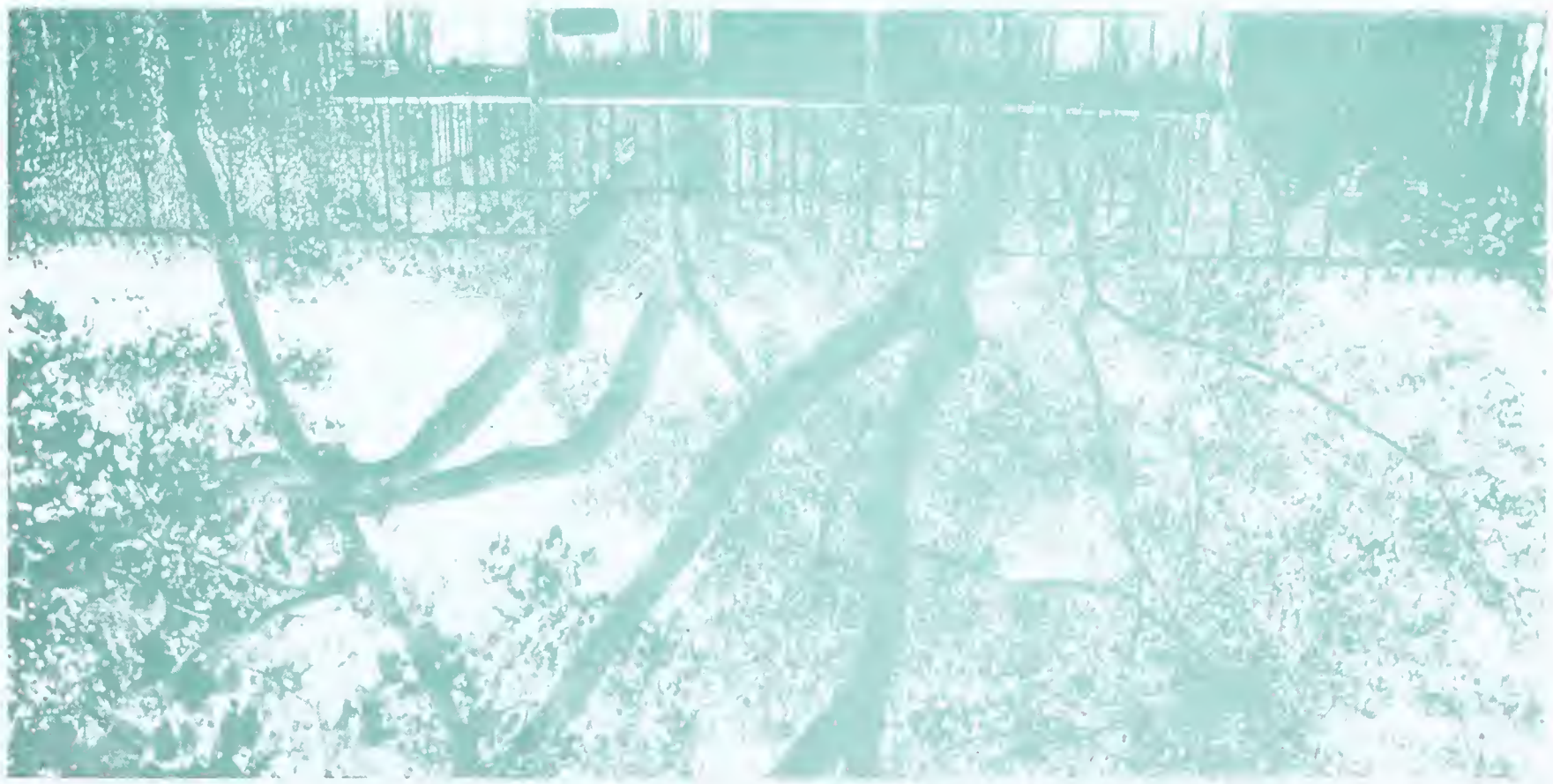
(b) Tacitus, *Germania*, 9, 39, 40, 43.

(c) J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed. Vol. II. p 9.

(d) *The Classical Review*, XIX. (1905), p. 331.

(e) Frazer, *Ibid.*, p. 11.

(f) F. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, Vol. II. p. 13.



THE SACRED BO TREE OF CEYLON.

planted it at Anuradhapura. Ever since then, despite the vicissitudes of that once great City, now only a heap of ruins, a few monks have always clung to the spot and tended the tree, which is now over two thousand years old. It belongs to the order of figs and has the peculiarity that the branches let down branchlets which, reaching the earth, send forth roots, and so a small forest grows up round the central trunk and therefore, even if the central trunk decays the branches continue to live. In the case of the Sacred Bo Tree special measures have always been taken to preserve it alive, and every century or so the monks have banked up earth around its central trunk so that, as the lower part became rotten, the upper part could send off fresh roots. In consequence it now stands in the centre of a series of terraces which are surrounded by containing walls, and what one really sees are the top two or three branches.

A few years ago these were in danger of dying and the monks in despair bethought themselves of calling in the aid of European botanists. These men soon divined the cause of the malady which was afflicting the tree. The Pilgrims were in the habit of offering milk to the tree, as a kind of propitiatory sacrifice, and, the space within the containing wall around the tree being very restricted, the large quantities of milk offered were poisoning the ground. It may be added that the number of pilgrims had vastly increased owing to the fact that, Ceylon being now under a stable and powerful Government, a pilgrimage was safer than it had been in days of old. Thus through well-doing the British Government was largely responsible for the threatened death of the Bo Tree! The English scientists told the monks that the remedy was very simple, they must stop the pilgrims from offering milk,—but the monks assured them that this was impossible. The pilgrims would break out into open riot if they were not allowed to make their offerings. So an ingenious Englishmen devised a plan which met the case, namely, saved the tree without interfering with the offering of the sacrifice thereto. A high iron railing was placed on the top of the walls and the pilgrims were instructed to pour their offerings of milk against the wall, on the side furthest from the tree. Gutters were made beside the path; these conducted the milk away from the tree into the open, and this is the procedure which now takes place.

In this incident we not only have an example of a sacred tree, but also of sacrifices offered to it, and since the same tree is sacred in India, among the Hindus, there can be little doubt that the Bo Tree, although venerated for its sentimental connection with Buddha, is, for all that, a vestige of former tree worship in which the spirit of the tree was propitiated by offerings.

In China also there are many trees which are peculiarly sacred either because they are big, or because of some supposed historical event, but there is plenty of evidence to show that there still exists a wide-spread belief that all trees and plants are, or at any rate may be, inhabited by spirits. Since, moreover, to the primitive savage, trees and plants are one of the chief sources of food, it is not surprising to find that most races have a tradition that there

was a Cosmic Tree, often described as supporting the world, which was thus envisaged as its fruit. The Norse conception of Yggdrasil, which upheld the earth, is probably the best known example of this kind of Cosmic Tree, but many other races, such as the ancient Mexicans, and the people of Asia Minor had a legend concerning it.

The traditions and superstitions connected with trees would fill this volume, but what is of special interest is the wide-spread belief that the souls of the dead enter trees, particularly such as grow out of their graves, and there await an opportunity of being reborn on earth. The Masonic sprig of Acacia is a modern survival of this ancient tradition.[a] Here its importance lies in the fact that the Cosmic Tree at the edge of the Underworld may have been intended to serve as a kind of repository for good souls, where they could await an opportunity for re-birth. It is obvious that this veneration for Sacred Trees would naturally tend to blend with other aspects of the Vegetation, or Fertility, Cult, especially with that of the Dying God.

TRACES OF THE VEGETATION CULT IN THE HUNG RITE.

In the Hung ritual there are not lacking traces of this Cult, although they are not so pronounced as they are in some other Rites, but this may be because it formed the main theme of some preceding degree, now practically lost. Even so, in Wang Yun Lung we seem to have a faint remembrance of a Vegetation God who was slain. We are told that he had arms like the branches of trees and was of superhuman size. This suggests a Tree God. He also had red hair, a most unusual feature for a Chinese, but a wide-spread characteristic of those who are supposed to represent a Corn God. On his tomb were inscribed drops of water, an element whose close association with the God of Vegetation is always stressed.[b]

The Peck of Rice, so prominently displayed on the Hung altar, as well as the mention of the 108 Rice Plants near the Three Rivers, both point to a time when these emblems of the Vegetation Cult played a more important part than they do to-day. Furthermore, all the plants and trees mentioned in this chapter have a clear reference to death, resurrection and immortality, and lest the Fertility aspect itself should seem to be missing, let me draw attention to the fact that the Master purifies the Temple by aspurging it with water, using as a sprinkler a sprig of Pomegranate.[c] This plant is so wide-spread an emblem of Fertility and Abundance that this mere mention is sufficient, it was avowedly for this reason that pomegranates were carved on the two pillars outside the porchway of King Solomon's Temple.

(a) For a full discussion of this subject with numerous examples and an explanation of the deep significance of this belief, see Ward, *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* pp. 225-228.

(b) See *Ibid.*, p. 34.

(c) *The Hung Society*, Vol. I., p. 50.

In conclusion we have seen that the Peach Tree serves as a test, as well as a promise, when the candidate takes his oath, and cannot overlook the fact that his blood, and that of the cock, are poured out before it. Now blood is offered to trees in many parts of the world, as a few examples will prove. The natives of the Bissagos Isles, off the West Coast of Africa, sacrifice various creatures to trees, including cocks,[a] and the Masai pour the blood of a goat at the foot of certain trees.[b] Among the Galla of East Africa the custom of smearing blood on sacred trees is almost universal,[c] and the custom is even found in India, for in Gilgit goats' blood is smeared on any tree before it is cut down in order to propitiate it.[d] With these facts before us, we are entitled to believe that the blood of the cock and of the initiate are really offered to the sacred Peach Tree, although perhaps this aspect has long since been forgotten.

(a) J. B. L. Durand, *Voyage du Senegal* (Paris, 1802), p. 119.

(b) Sir H. Johnston, *The Uganda Protectorate* ((London, 1902), II., 832.

(c) J. F. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., Vol. II., p. 34.

(d) J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, p. 116.

"The Mouth of the Tiger."

CHAPTER VI.

THE WHITE COCK.

N China the White Cock is regarded as the "Bird of the Sun," and is peculiarly associated with the burial rites. Often the car which conveys offerings to the tomb has on its central shaft pole the carved head of a cock! If the corpse has been kept unburied for some time, a live white cock, with its feet tied together, is stood on the catafalque while the procession is passing through the streets, and de Groot considers its presence is intended to strengthen the soul, which has become enfeebled by having to wander about in misery while the burial have been delayed. In support of this view he points out that the cock is regarded as the emblem of the Sun, because each morning it announces his rising, and in the *P'i ya*, Chapter 6, an 11th century Chinese book, we find, "It is an old saying that in the Sun there is a cock . . . ."[(a)] As, however, the Sun is the chief embodiment of the Yang principle in nature, and therefore of life and light, it naturally follows that his bird, the Cock, represents a very considerable quantity of the Yang principle. And this is explicitly stated in the *Ch'un-ts'iu shwoh thi tsze*, or "Disquisitions on passages occurring in the Ch'un-ts'iu,"[(b)] wherein we learn that "The Cock is the emblem of the accumulated Yang and of the South. Ethereal things which partake of the character of fire and of the Yang element have the property of flaming up, hence, when the Yang (Sun) rises above the horizon the cock crows, because things of the same nature influence each other." As the vital principle in man consists of the Yang principle, it follows that the soul of the deceased will draw strength, or Yang influence, from the Cock.

The Cock is also supposed to drive away evil spirits, for the Yang principle is opposed to the Yin principle, of which evil spirits consist, a fact proved by the way in which evil spirits vanish at dawn, as soon as the Sun's rays touch the earth. Moreover, it is the crowing of the cock at dawn which gives them warning that it is time to depart, and hence they naturally fear the cock at all times. In this belief the Chinese are far from singular, for in European folklore we constantly find that the ghosts vanish as soon as a cock crows, while the vitalising force of this bird is represented in certain obscene statues of Priapus, where the Roman God is represented by a Cock's head.[1]

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[1] On Gnostic Gems Abraxas is often depicted with a cock's head, no doubt because he was regarded as the creator of the visible world. See illus. p. 40.

(a) See illustration in J. J. M. de Groot—*The Religious System of China*, Vol. I., p. 198, also pp. 200-218 for many of the facts contained in this section.

(b) See de Groot, Vol. I., p. 200.

The Chinese exorcists also prefer white cocks when exorcising, and one 8th century writer informs us that "If a white cock be fed during three years, it is fit to be employed by disembodied souls to serve them."[a] Furthermore, the blood drawn from the comb of a cock is used to pour vitality into a person who is hovering between life and death. It may be given in pills or rubbed on the body: both are considered equally efficacious. It is, however, in the funeral ceremony known as "dotting the tablet" that the use of the blood of a white cock most clearly represents the inpourings of the energy of the Yang principle. At the end of the funeral ceremony the soul is believed to settle in its own ancestral tablet, whereon is engraved its name and title. This transference only becomes complete when a highly placed personage, preferably a Mandarin, has ceremonially completed the writing thereon by adding sundry dots which until then had been omitted. These he marks on the tablet with a brush dipped in blood drawn from the comb of a white cock[1], at the same time uttering certain conjurations. The final one, as he dots the word *Tablet* is, "I mark the word, *tablet*: display spirituality, O Tablet."[b]

This sentence amply describes the purpose of the Tablets. By being thus imbued with the soul of the dead man, strengthened by the Divine, or Yang, principle, it will be enabled to confer on the descendants of the deceased manifold blessings. As de Groot says, "In short, the dotting is intended to infuse life into the tablet, or rather into the Manes which inhabit it and are incorporated with it."[c] It should be noted that as he dots the tablet the Mandarin also breathes on it, an age-old and widespread symbol for imparting life and spiritual energy.

We thus see that the white cock in the Hung ceremony is itself a relic of magic, and can have little doubt that in those lodges in which the blood of the cock is mingled with that of the initiates and drunk, the original idea was to increase their vital energy. As we perceive that the blood of the cock, and, indeed, the mere presence of a cock at funerals, was supposed to strengthen the soul or ghost of the dead man, the presence of this bird and the use of its blood in the Triad ceremony show that symbolically the initiate is dead, and his soul requires strengthening in order to enable it to go forward on the long and arduous journey subsequently described by the Vanguard.

As the killing of the cock is contrary to all "sound" Buddhist teaching, this detail must be Taoist, and probably it is of primeval antiquity, dating back to an even earlier period of history than Laotsze. The fact that the cock represents A'Tsat, the traitor, is probably an afterthought, an explanation added at a later date, though like enough, even so, given at a period antecedent to the supposed historical incidents in the reign of Khang Hsi.

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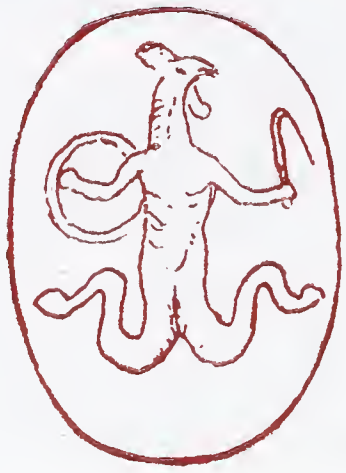
[1]Sometimes vermilion ink is used, but this is really a substitute.

(a)Chen Tsang-khi in Pen-ts'ao shih i, quoted by de Groot, p. 201.

(b)De Groot—*The Religious System of China*, p. 215.

(c)Ibid., p. 216.

Finally, before leaving this subject, it is well to bring to mind the title of the "Thieves Society," of which details were given in Appendix 3 in Vol. I. The Society is called "The Three Dots Brotherhood," which probably refers to the three dots, representing three drops of water, which were depicted on each side of the obelisk set up over the grave of Wan Yun Lung. In view, however, of the importance of dotting the tablet at a funeral with cock's blood, it seems probable that there is a reference to this custom in the name of the brotherhood, for we see from the ritual that towards the end of the ceremony the initiates are supposed to be ghosts, since they go round the Lodge the reverse way of the Sun. As the corpse of a cock plays an even more prominent part in the rites of this Society than it does in the original Hung ceremony, there seems good reason to think that the title of the brotherhood is indeed connected with this funeral custom, though in what precise way we cannot as yet decide.



"ABRAXAS"
ON A GNOSTIC GEM.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SACRIFICE OF A WHITE HORSE AND A BLACK OX.

N some ways this is one of the most amazing incidents in the Hung ceremony, for it is clearly an imitation of the sacrifice to Heaven and Earth, which was the sole prerogative of the Emperor. By thus arrogating to their Society the right to make this sacrifice the Hung brethren clearly indicate their belief that among them is the true Emperor, and that the Manchu monarch who sat on the throne of China not only had no title thereto but that, being an usurper, Heaven could not be expected to accept his sacrifices. One of the earliest Chinese references we have to this sacrifice is that made by Kwan Ti and his two friends, which, although related in the Hung ritual, is also found in other Chinese accounts of these three heroes.

All through Chinese history we find this to be one of the most important forms of sacrifice offered to Heaven, and one usually restricted to the Emperor, as the *Son of Heaven*.[a] During the Manchu Dynasty this sacrifice was offered at Dawn on the Winter Solstice in the famous Temple of Heaven, which is situated in the Southern, or Chinese, City at Pekin. The Ancestral Tablets of four of the Emperor's forefathers are usually associated with that of Shang Ti, and in addition there are tablets for the sun, moon, planets, the constellations and the spirits of wind, rain, etc.. The colour for the worship of Heaven is blue and so far as possible all the implements used are of that colour.

The great Altar of Heaven, T'ien T'an, "consists of three circular terraces with marble ballustrades and triple staircases at the four cardinal points, which ascend to the upper terrace, which is ninety feet wide, the base being two hundred and ten feet across. The platform is laid with marble stones in nine concentric circles and everything is arranged in multiples of the number nine. The Emperor, prostrate before Heaven on the altar, surrounded first by the circle of terraces and their railings, and then by the horizon, seems to be in the centre of the universe, as he acknowledges himself inferior to Heaven and to Heaven alone. Round him on the pavement are figured the nine circles of as many Heavens, widening in successive multiples till the square of nine, the favourite number of numerical philosophy, is reached in the outer circle of 81 stones."[b]

(a)For further examples in China, see J. G. Frazer, *Pausanias*, IV., pp. 197-198.

(b)S. W. Bushell, *Chinese Art*, Vol. I., pp. 43-44.

In addition to this high altar there is another which lies to the North, and is called the *Altar of Prayer for Grain*, and to it the Emperor used to go each year in Spring to pray for a bountiful harvest. Here everything is blue, and since the altar is covered in it is possible to complete the "blue effect" in a manner impossible at the open air altar. One ingenious device is intended to produce a blue atmosphere, and in order to achieve this "venetians, made of thin rods of blue glass strung together by cords, are hung down over the tracery of doors and windows."

SACRIFICES TO HEAVEN AND THE UNDERWORLD.

As students of the Hung ritual, however, our main interest is not in the Temple of Heaven and Earth but in the offering of a white horse and a black ox. The former represents light and the sun, whereas the black ox is the appropriate offering made to the God or Goddess of the Underworld. At first sight it might seem that in the sacrifice of a horse we have a survival of a funeral custom forbidden by the Emperors as far back as A.D. 992. In that year a decree was issued which specifically forbade the economic waste involved in placing precious articles in the tomb of the deceased, and in particular the slaying of horses at the tomb.[a] This sacrifice, however, was of an entirely different nature to that offered in the Hung ceremony, for the underlying motive was to provide the dead man with horses to ride in the next world, and even to-day paper substitutes are often presented at the funeral of an important grandee.

It is clear, however, that it is not for this purpose that the white horse is slain in the Hung ceremony, despite the fact that the candidates are clearly symbolically dead, but for all that this funeral custom may have become linked with another idea and so helped to keep alive the custom of making the sacrifice. The horse has been regarded as sacred to various gods by many races, and usually it was the animal of the Sky God, and especially of the Sun. Thus the Greeks depicted Apollo as driving the Solar Chariot with its flaming white horses across the sky, and the horse was particularly sacred to Woden among the Teutons. It was regularly sacrificed to Thor at Upsala, and the white horse cut in the chalk of the Berkshire hills is believed to be a Saxon monument in honour of either Woden or Thor, dedicated as a thank offering for some Saxon victory. The old nursery rhyme:—

> Ride a cock Horse to Banbury Cross,
> See a fine lady sit on a *white horse*,
> Rings on her fingers and *bells* on her toes,
> She shall have music wherever she goes.

seems to be the worn down fragment of some long forgotten belief which was

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Vol. II., p. 698.

associated with a white horse hung with bells. What that belief was it is difficult to say, but the fact that a *white horse* and *bells* are associated both in an English Nursery Rhyme and in the ceremony of the Hung Society in China suggests that there is an underlying principle common to both which, if discovered, would throw considerable light on the whole subject.

It will be remembered that the White Cock represents the Solar Power, and hence in China the Yang Principle, and it seems probable that the White Horse with the Bells is also Solar, and hence an embodiment of the Yang Principle. It is clearly in antithesis with the black ox, which in many countries is associated with the Gods of the Underworld, or at any rate with the Earth Goddess. As in China the earth is the embodiment of the Yin, or Dark Principle, we see that in order to maintain the balance some creature sacred to the Sun should be sacrificed. With this possible explanation before us, let us proceed to consider the White Horse as a creature sacred to the Sun, and see to what extent it is so regarded among other nations.

SACRED HORSES.

When we turn to the legends of Greece and Rome we find numerous indications that the horse was sacred, and that white horses had a peculiar sanctity attached to them. Thus horses were sacred to Poseidon, and when Theseus called on him to avenge the supposed wrong that he believed his own son Hippolytus had done him, the God of the Sea sent a fierce bull from the waves as the young man drove his chariot along the shore. The horses, terrified at the bull, bolted, and Hippolytus was flung from his chariot and killed.[a] Diana, however, restored him to life with the aid of Æsculapius, and he subsequently dwelt with her at Nemi.[b] The hero, as a thankoffering, dedicated *twenty* horses to Æsculapius.[c]

In Mediæval legends we find this ancient Greek hero transformed into an early Christian Martyr under the name of St. Hippolytus, wherein he is said to have been dragged to death by horses on August 13th, that is to say, on Diana's own day, a strange coincidence, and with him were slain 20 members of his household. Thus he ascended to Heaven accompanied by 20 companions, himself making the 21st member of the band. We therefore find this legend incorporating the peculiarly popular Triad number of 21, and cannot fail to note that the Classical prototype of the Saint dedicated the same number of horses to Æsculapius.[d] There are good reasons for suspecting that Hippolytus was originally a sacred horse, and not a human being. It has been suggested by S. Reinach that Hippolytus, which means the *loosed horse*, was originally

(a) Euripides, *Hippolytus*, 20 sq. Apollodorus, *Epitoma*, I., 18.

(b) J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., Vol. I., p. 20.

(c) Pausanias, XI. 27.

(d) J. G. Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., Vol. I., p. 21.

"a sacred horse which was torn to pieces by his worshippers at the solemn sacrifice, just as Dionysus Zagreus was said to have been rent in pieces by his worshippers."[a]

Now the substitute for a man in the case of Dionysus was a bull, and according to the Classical legend it was a bull which caused the death of Hippolytus, may it not be that here we have a dim tradition of the sacrifice of a horse and an ox in Europe, one offered to Heaven and the other to Earth, or the Underworld? It will be noticed that in both cases there is a tradition of a God-man who was slain and rose from the grave, while the Hung ritual deals with the journey of the dead through the Underworld. We may not as yet be able to decide on this point, but it is certainly worth considering, for with Hippolytus were often associated Orestes and Diomede. The former was a matricide, who was cleansed of his guilt before a Temple at Troezen, said to have been dedicated by Hippolytus to Artemis, who is a Goddess of the Underworld. Further, the cleansing water was drawn from a sacred fountain near by, which was called the *Horse Fountain*,[b] and so we may suspect that Orestes was originally washed in the blood of a horse, just as in the Rites of Cybele candidates were washed in the blood of a bull to cleanse them from their sins.

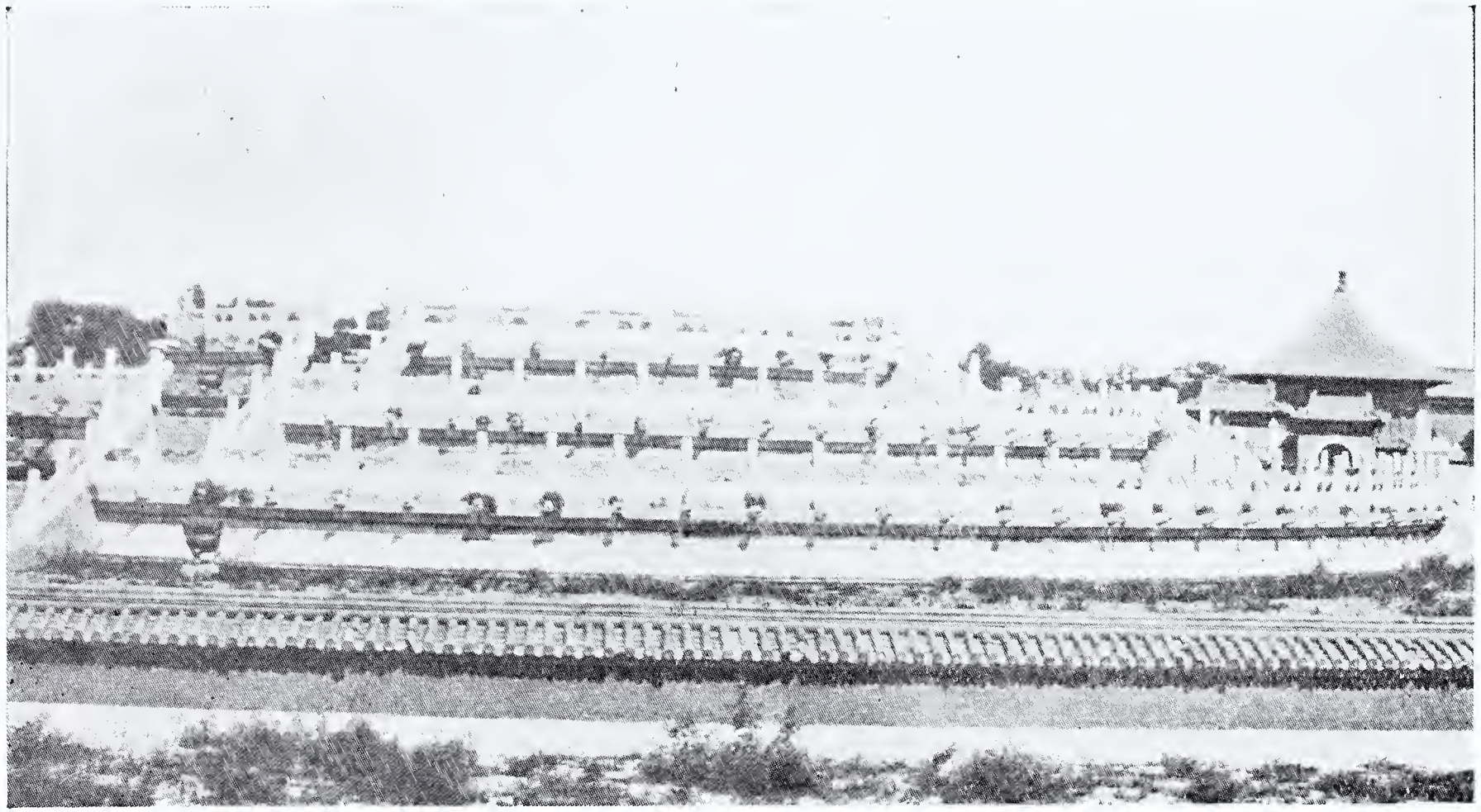
But if Hippolytus was originally a sacred horse, was he white? There seem good reasons for thinking that he was. At Troezen, in addition to the Temple of Artemis, dedicated by the hero, there was one to Hippolytus himself, which was dedicated by Diomede. The latter was closely associated with horses, and the Veneti, who dwelt at the head of the Adriatic and were famous horse breeders, had a sacred grove dedicated to Diomede. Here they were wont to sacrifice a *white horse* in his honour, In short, we may suspect that Diomede and Hippolytus were originally closely associated, if not identical. Indeed it seems probable that Hippolytus *was* the sacred Horse of Diomede, who at a later date was transformed into a man, just as the reverse process occurred in the case of Dionysus, where, instead of sacrificing a man, a bull was substituted.

If this be so, we shall probably not be far out if we consider that there was a great horse festival whereat the Sacred White Horse, accompanied by twenty attendant common horses, was offered up as a sacrifice to some patron God of Horses, perhaps Diomede. The name Hippolytus, *horse loosed*, instantly brings to mind the great Indian Horse Sacrifice which is mentioned in Indian legends dealing with the heroic and epic period of Indian history, and particularly in the Mahabharata.

THE HORSE SACRIFICE IN INDIA.

If any Prince thought that he was entitled to be regarded as Overlord of all India he set loose a horse which was followed by an army. Wherever the horse

(a) Ibid., 27, 46.
(b) Pausanias, II., 31, 4, 8, and 9.



THE ALTAR OF HEAVEN, PEKIN.

wandered the army followed, and the Kings through whose realms the horse passed had either to submit or to fight. If they allowed the animal to pass without opposition they thereby acknowledged the Overlordship of its owner. At the end of a stated period, usually a year, the horse was led back to the King who had sent it forth, accompanied by embassies from all the Kings who had submitted. Before the horse set out on its journey it was consecrated by means of a series of ceremonies, of which one is particularly important from our standpoint. "A low caste man took a four eyed dog (i.e. with dark patches over each eye), killed it with a club of Sidhroka wood, and placing the body on a mat or hoop of rattan let it float under the horse, at the same time pronouncing a formula to ensure the destruction of anyone attempting to hinder the consummation of the sacrifice."[a]

Now it will be remembered that in the story of Yudishthira,[b] and also in that of the Red Skin Warrior,[c] the hero entered Paradise accompanied by his dog, who alone had gone the whole way with him. Therefore the horse in the *Asvamedha* was in like manner accompanied by a dog when it, too, entered Paradise. If the horse originally represented a man we should have an almost exact parallel with these two legends, and the fact that one of the legends is Hindu strengthens the position. May it not be that symbolically the dog represents Duty, which is fulfilled by the sacrifice of the horse? When the horse returned home it was solemnly sacrificed, and the Rites performed were most elaborate, some, such as those performed by the Queen, being of a distinctly revolting character. They indicate, however, that in some way the horse was considered to be the embodiment of the principle of Fertility, and that this principle was also connected with the Sun. In the Mahabharata it is Yudishthira who performed this sacrifice and was acknowledged as Overlord of all India.

Among the historical kings who performed the Asvamedha, or Horse Sacrifice, were Pushyamitra, Samudragupta, Kumaragupta, and several others. It should also be noted that after the horse had been consecrated it was turned loose in a North Easterly direction, accompanied by 100 old horses. On its return it was slain by being smothered, and then the obscene rites took place wherein the Queen played the most prominent part. She "proceeded to lie down next to the dead horse and was covered with a cloak. In that position she performed an obscene act with the horse, symbolising the transmission to her of its great powers of fertility. Meanwhile the Priests and women took part in a series of questions and answers, usually of a very free nature."[d] The

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(a) N. M. Penzer, *The Ocean of Story*, Vol. IV., p. 15.

(b) *The Hung Society*, Vol. II., p. 107.

(c) Ibid., p. 73.

(d) For a detailed description of the whole ceremonial see N. M. Penzer, *The Ocean* of *Story*, Vol. IV., p. 14-16, to whose help I am deeply indebted. See also Barnett, *Antiquities of India*, pp. 169-171.

dead horse was subsequently cut up, roasted and offered to the Prajapati, being subsequently eaten by the worshippers. Thus we have an old magical rite, as indicated by the Queen's conduct, gradually changing into a religious sacrament. Moreover, as the death of the horse of the Sun precedes the symbolical fertilisation of the Queen, representing the Earth, we have here a definite trace of the Dying God Myth which played such an important part in the Cults of Attis and Adonis. Perhaps the name of Hippolytus therefore indicates that he represents a similar custom in the West.

HORSES OF THE SUN.

That the horse was regarded by many ancient races as sacred to the Sun is admitted by most students, and therefore a few examples will suffice. The Rhodians regarded the Sun as the chief Deity and every year dedicated a new chariot and four horses to him, which they flung into the sea.[a] No doubt the offering was purely practical in intent; after rushing across the sky at a break neck pace for a whole year Apollo might well require a new outfit, the old one being worn out. The kings of Judah were repeatedly reproved by the prophets for dedicating chariots and horses to the Sun,[b] while the Spartans[c] and Persians[d] both regularly sacrificed horses to him.

When we turn to consider the colour white, we find in like manner numerous instances which prove that it was peculiarly sacred, especially in the case of horses. Among the Romans, white horses were sacred not only to the Sun but also to the King of the Gods, Jupiter, and even today in England white horses are considered lucky, numerous superstitions being associated with them. Indeed, Mr. W. Ridgeway[e] has produced abundant evidence to show that among the various branches of the Aryan Race white horses were regarded as especially sacred.

We can therefore feel sure that a white horse is sacrificed by the Hung Society in order to strengthen the Yang principle, and so help Heaven to overcome those powers of Yin which would tend to prevent the restoration of Ming, or Light. There seems, moreover, to be a peculiarly close association between the candidate and the sacrifice, for the Triad slang for Recruits, is *Horses*, and the Vanguard says that 21 *persons* went aboard the Hung Boat. We have seen that the Hung Boat represents the Barque which carries the souls of the *Dead* to the Western Paradise, and we have also seen that St. Hippolytus was accompanied by 20 followers on his last journey to Heaven. If Hippolytus represented a White Horse, and the 20 horses he dedicated to Æsculapius

(a) Festus sv. October equis., p. 181, ed. C. O. Muller.

(b) II. Kings, 23. 11.

(c) Pausanias, III., 20, 4.

(d) Xenephon, *Cyropaed*, XIII., 3, 24. Pausanias, III., 20, 4.

(e) *The Origin and Influence of the Thoroughbred Horse*, pp. 105, 186, 187, 294, 295, 419.

represented the 20 common horses which were slain at the same time as the white horse, it would seem as if the white horse in the Hung ritual vicariously represents the candidate, or the Vanguard as symbolising the candidate. That there is an inner, mystical meaning attached to the 21 who entered the boat is doubtless true, but this does not mean that the other explanation is incorrect. On the contrary it might be the original meaning to which, at a later date, a deeper mystical meaning has been attached.

THE WHITE HORSE AND THE CANDIDATE.

If this explanation be accepted, the White Horse represents the candidate, who is thus symbolically sacrificed in order to strengthen the Yang principle and it should be noted that he *is* subsequently made one with this sacrifice by eating part of the horse, and the sacrifice thus becomes definitely sacramental. In this connection we cannot overlook the significance of the Horse-dealers, who were five in number, like the Five Founders, and who appear to be understudies for the Five Monks. They would therefore correspond in some measure to the Horse in the Triad sacrifice, while the candidate would correspond with the monks. Since the Horse is slain before the candidates enter the Lodge, this would imply that the candidates were slain in the anteroom, and it is significant that they are told the Traditional History before the White Horse is slain, while at the time when it is being slain they are going through a series of ceremonies which imply that they are dead, although still outside the Lodge.

This sacrifice is probably Taoist, or even pre-Taoist, for it certainly cannot be Buddhist, since that faith forbids the taking of life, and consequently all animal sacrifices. It should be remembered however, that a white horse plays a very prominent part in Chinese Buddhism and is probably connected with Hindu beliefs. According to the latter the tenth incarnation of Vishnu, the Preserver, Kalki, the coming Salvator, shall appear riding on a *White Horse*, bearing a flaming sword in his hand, to bring peace to the whole world. It may be that it was some version of this prophecy which reached China in the 1st century A.D. and led to the strange dream of the reigning Emperor, but it is equally possible that he had heard through the Nestorian Christians of the Rider on the White Horse in the Apocalypse,[(a)] and it was this story which caused his dream. Be that as it may, the dream itself was of great importance, since to it is due the first official entry of Buddhism into China.

THE EMPEROR'S DREAM.

In A.D. 64 the Emperor Ming Ti[1] had a dream, which recurred on several successive nights, in which he saw a man in golden raiment seated on a white

[1] A most significant name, meaning, Son of Light.

(a) Rev. 6. 2.

horse, holding in his hands a bow and arrow, and pointing towards the West. The Emperor determined to find the Mabito—the true Man of his vision,[a] and sent out a mission of eighteen men to find this Teacher. They never actually reached India, for on the road thither they met two monks, leading a *White Horse* laden with their belongings, which included copies of the Buddhist Scriptures, who were on their way to China to teach its people the Law of Buddha. As soon as they saw the *White Horse* the members of the Imperial Mission felt sure that their task was accomplished and they returned with the two monks and the white horse to the Capital, where the strangers were well received and lodged in a building which still exists, and is known as the *Monastery of the White Horse*.[b] Indeed this *White Horse* made a great and lasting impression not only in China, but also in Japan, where it is associated with As'vaghosha, and in several Japanese Temples a white horse is constantly kept.[c]

We thus see that while the *sacrifice* of a white horse would be abhorrent to all strict Buddhists, to them its sanctity would be as strong, although on different grounds, as it would be to the Taoists. Moreover, in the wanderings of this Buddhist White Horse, which led to the spiritual conquest of China, we may see a continuation of the Hindu tradition of the horse whose wanderings led to the subjection of the Principalities of India by the material Ruler, Yudishthira. In any case, we have seen enough to perceive that the sacrifice of a White Horse in the Triad ceremony has a far deeper significance than that of supplying a banquet for the brethren when the ceremony has been completed. Let us therefore turn to consider the other victims which perished at the same time.

THE BLACK OX.

Black is so obviously the opposite of white that if the former be regarded as symbolising light and goodness, black naturally becomes the symbol of evil and darkness. Thus among the Chinese it represents the negative, feminine and passive Yin principle, which is opposed to the positive, masculine and active Yang principle. Above all it is associated with the Earth and what lies beneath it, and so belongs to the Gods of the Underworld. Therefore in most ceremonies of evocation, particularly the evocation of the Dead, it is regarded as the appropriate colour. The Black Cat of the Mediæval witch is her special familiar for this reason, and so when we turn to ceremonies intended to propitiate the Rulers of the Underworld, the Realm of the Dead, we are not surprised to find that the victims offered are usually black.[1]

[1]Black animals are also often sacrificed to obtain rain. See Frazer, *The Magic Art*, 3rd ed., Vol. I., pp. 250-290. Compare this with the fact that the among Chinese the colour black is associated with water.

(a)Murakami, *Handbook of Buddhism*, p. 290.

(b)Bukkyo, *Kakushu Koyo*, Vol. I., ch. I., p. 4.

(c)A. Lloyd, *The Creed of Half Japan*, pp. 76-79.

Such ceremonies are not always regarded as evil. On the contrary they may be considered by those participating as good, nay, more, as a solemn religious duty, and not necessarily as worship of devils. Thus at Platea, in Greece, each year a *black* bull was sacrificed by the chief magistrate of that city, who then filled a bowl of wine and poured out a libation, saying, "I drink to the men who died for the freedom of Greece."[a] Here we have merely a simple kind of memorial service to the men who fell at the Battle of Platea, against the Persians, but when, under the influence of the Mediæval Church the Underworld grew to be regarded as Hell, the dwelling place of devils and of the damned, such ancient sacrifices as these took on a more sinister aspect. They were considered to be worship rendered to the devil, and as such aroused the wrath of the ecclesiastical authorities. It is probable that those who at that time performed such Rites also considered that the sacrifice was made to the Evil One, and to that extent were truly guilty of black magic.

If the appropriateness of the colour black to the Powers of Earth and the Underworld is thus evident, the same is equally true of the animal selected as the victim. The horse, which gallops swiftly over the plains in its pride, fitly represents the Sun, which appears to speed across the sky, but the patient plodding ox, drawing the plough, is essentially of the soil. By its labour man is enabled to wrest from the ground a livelihood, and its close symbolical connection with earth is shown by the attributes of the sign of the Zodiac, Taurus, which is considered to preside over the element of earth.

Under these circumstances what more appropriate offering could be made to Mother Earth than her patient servant, through whose labours she is enabled to bring forth her increase? The Earth Goddess was originally the Goddess of all who slept beneath the soil, and it was only gradually that the aspect of the bountiful Mother was separated from that of the Queen of the Underworld. In time, however, men came to feel that there was little in common between the smiling corn fields and orchards which adorned the surface of the land, and the dim caverns beneath the soil, where the ghosts were supposed to dwell. Hence there arose a separate Queen of the Underworld who grew more sombre in aspect as ages rolled by; yet still she retained some traces of her original connection with smiling Mother Earth. The corn which was planted in the furrow, made by the ox-drawn plough, rose from the dead in a golden harvest, and in like manner the grave was but a furrow wherein was planted the human corn from which the spiritual harvest would also rise. Thus it is that among many agricultural races the coffin is drawn to the grave-side by oxen.

We therefore see the appropriateness of Black Oxen as an offering to the Gods of the Underworld, and hence if any desire to enter their grim abode it

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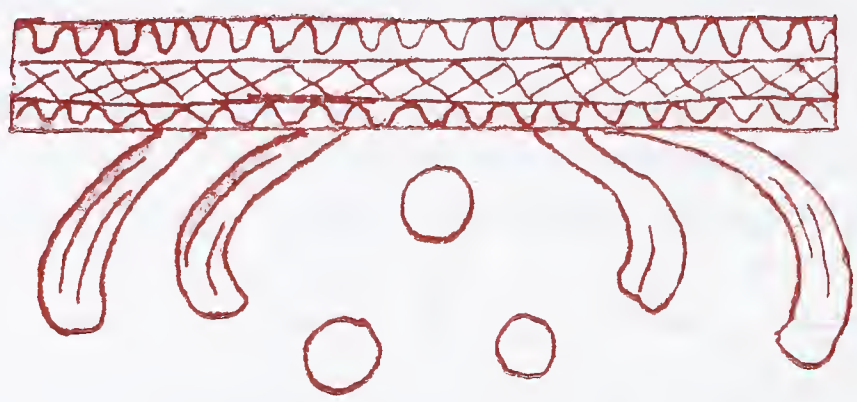
(a) Plutarch, Aristides, 21.
Strabo, IX., 2, 3.
J. G. Frazer, *The Dying God*, p. 95.

behoves him to sacrifice black cattle in their honour. Perhaps one of the most famous descriptions of such a sacrifice, and one peculiarly appropriate to our subject, is that given in Virgil.[a] Æneas, being anxious to enter the Underworld in order to see his dead father, sacrificed *black oxen* to the Goddess thereof, and this incident explains why the Hung brethren sacrifice a black ox. The whole ceremony which the candidate is about to take represents the journey of the soul through the Underworld, and the white horse symbolises the candidate, who is supposed to be slain, after which his soul sets out on the journey described by the Vanguard. In order to enable the soul to pass safely through the Underworld it is necessary to pay a fee to the Rulers thereof and propitiate them. Thus while the Yang principle has been strengthened by the sacrifice of the White Horse to the Sun, the Yin principle is propitiated in order that it may allow the soul to pass through the Underworld and be raised to Heaven as a shining Ming. Thereby the candidate symbolically *overthrows the power of Ts'ing and the Ming principle in him is restored* in the Light of the Heavenly City.

(a) Virgil, Æneid, VI., 262-328. For further details see *The Hung Society*, Vol. II., p. 133.



THE HUNG BRIDGE AND THE THREE STEPPING STONES.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BRIDGES AND THE BOAT.

IT will be realised that the various bridges which appear in the traditions which we considered in the second volume are not all of the same type and it seems desirable to see whether they can be grouped in any way. There are two possible tests; the first being, what does the bridge span? and the other; what is its geographical position? At first sight the former appears the more attractive test to apply and we will therefore see what results will be forthcoming if we use it.

The two obvious obstacles which have to be crossed are fire and water, and this brings to mind the use of these two elements in the Ancient Mysteries, where, however, they usually accompany the other elements, earth and air. In the Hung ritual we find all four elements playing an important part, while the fifth Chinese element, metal, is represented by the Three Hung Cash, and possibly by the swords and the two planks of the Bridge. So far as Earth is concerned it is in this element that the candidates extinguish their joss-sticks after swearing secrecy at each Gate, while the use of Water appears both in the aspurging of the Temple during the Opening Ceremony and when the candidates wash their faces. Fire likewise plays its part: firstly, in the use of joss-sticks, when the candidates take their oaths, secondly, in the candles and lamps on the altar, and thirdly, in the burning brazier, which, as we can see from the illustration,[a] is placed immediately in front of the Master. Air is less prominently used, but the fan undoubtedly symbolises that element, and the fact that the Instructor is called, *The White Fan*, shows that it is considered of real importance, the more so as the Master is often called, *The Incense Master*, thereby linking him with the element of fire.

From the above it is clear that in the Hung ceremony considerable importance is attached to the elements, wherein it conforms with the majority of Mystery Rites. Are we then entitled to consider that the Bridges are connected with the elements? It can be argued that each connects earth with earth and spans air, and so if under one bridge there is fire and under another water, two bridges would between them cover the four elements. It is an attractive thesis and a good deal of support to this view is given by some of the stories we have been considering.

In Lucian we hear of a Bridge which spans a ditch full of Fire and leads into the City of the Damned, while the same author mentions a Bridge made of

(a) See illustration in Vol. I., op. p. 14.

Water, a most unusual feature, which spans a gulf in the Ocean. Here, therefore, we have a Bridge linking Earth and spanning Fire, and another which links Water and spans Air. Furthermore, if we are adopting this line of investigation we must be prepared to treat as a Bridge anything which enables the traveller to cross a gap wherein lies either Fire or Water. In that case the Ferry Boat of Charon represents a Bridge over Water, and so does the Magic Herb which enabled the hero to cross the Ocean, in the tale of *The Queen of the Serpents*.

Applying this test, we find that there is a Bridge which crosses Water *into* the Underworld in the Norse account, in Virgil, in Dante and in the Maori Legends, whereas the Bridge in the Mahommedan tradition of the Red Hot Bar, and that depicted at Chaldon, is over Fire. Now if we had either only one Bridge, or always two Bridges, each of which crossed different elements, we should feel that this analysis was really helpful, but unfortunately this is not the case. Perhaps the most complete and accurate account of this old tradition is that given in the Eddas where both bridges cross Water. The first, clearly enough, leads into the Underworld, while the second, or Byfrost, spans the Heavenly River of Ocean. Nowhere is it stated that either spans Fire, neither do the geographical positions of Fire and Water always correspond. In Lucian the Fiery Ditch surrounds the City of Dis, while the Water Bridge clearly connects with the Heavenly regions, but in the Mahommedan and Parsee accounts the Bridge, although over Fire, terminates in Paradise at least, if not in the High Heavens. In the case of St. Patrick's Purgatory we seem to have a blending of both elements, for immediately beneath the Bridge is Water, but we are also told that beneath this is the Pit of Hell, while the Bridge is surrounded by fog or mist, which may imply steam. On the whole, therefore, it seems safer to apply a geographical test, but this may often be co-ordinated with the two elements, for in the majority of cases we shall find that Fire is in some way connected with the Underworld, whereas Water, though sometimes crossed in the Underworld, is usually linked with a place of Bliss.

If we take the Traditional History of the Hung Society we clearly get references first to a Bridge over Fire and then to one over Water. When the monks prayed to Buddha in the burning abbey we are specifically told that the Temple filled with smoke and a Causeway, or Bridge, appeared, across which they escaped amid the flames of the burning building. Much later, after passing through many vicissitudes, and being hunted by their enemies, they crossed an arm of the Sea, or the Ocean itself, by means of a Bridge of Two Planks, created for them by two genii. Thus we have the Fire and the Water Bridges and geographically they seem to correspond with the Bridge into the Underworld, which is here represented by their flight and pursuit, and the Bridge into Paradise, or Heaven, which crossed the Sea.

Against this explanation must be set the fact that their trials did not end

when they had crossed the second Bridge, as we should have expected if they had reached a place of Bliss. Perhaps, however, the ritual itself will help us here. Unfortunately at times it seems to get these two Bridges mixed up, which is, perhaps, not altogether surprising, considering the vicissitudes through which the Society has passed. We have traces of a Bridge crossed by the candidate outside the Lodge, before he even enters the Hung Gate, then we have his entrance under an Arch of brass and steel Swords, which is actually called *Passing the Bridge*. Moreover, we have undisputable evidence that some such Bridge had to be crossed at this point in the ceremony, for in article 18 of the Thirty-six Oaths, as given by Schlegel,[a] we find the categorical statement that the candidate has "passed the Bridge laid *before* the Hung Gate." This clearly means that he has passed a bridge long before he reaches the Bridge of Iron and Brass, for this is shown in the picture[b] as beyond the altar itself, and therefore well inside the Hung Gate. Furthermore, the Vanguard distinctly says that he did not dare to cross by this bridge but went by means of three Stepping Stones, and these stones are shown both in the picture and in the drawings of the Bridge which appear in some of the rituals.[c]

WERE THERE THREE BRIDGES?

Therefore, either there were not *two*, but *three*, Bridges, or else the crossing of the first Bridge, which should take place outside the Lodge, is simulated by this *Bridge of Swords* at the entrance of the Temple. Although there yet remains this element of doubt, we have clear evidence of a Fiery Ditch[d] and of a River of Water, both of which must be crossed. The former seems to be represented by the brazier, which, according to the picture, stands in front of the Master's seat, while the latter is symbolically crossed by the Stepping Stones which lead to the Market Place of Universal Peace. At this point the details we possess of the *Three Dots Brotherhood* prove most valuable, for they show which of these elements must be crossed first. In the Hung ritual no definite rubric describes either of these crossings, but in the *Three Dots Brotherhood* the candidate first purchases a glass of Water, then jumps over a Fire, and finally steps on Three Stepping Stones.[e] Now when he received the Water he was going clockwise, which implies life on Earth, and therefore this probably indicates a birth ceremony, and the three journeys round the Temple which follow symbolise youth, manhood, and old age. After this he turns in the reverse direction, a procedure which always indicates death and a journey through the Underworld. At the end of the third round contrary to

(a) See *The Hung Society*, Vol. I., p. 170.
(b) *Ibid.*, p. 14.
(c) *Ibid.*, p. 58, and illus. on p. 50 in Vol. III.
(d) *Ibid.*, p. 29.
(e) *Ibid.*, p. 178.

the Sun he leaps over the fire, which symbolises crossing a Bridge over Fire. The next incident is the purchase of fruit at a stall, an action clearly corresponding with the purchase by the Hung Heroes of a Peach in the Market Place of Universal Peace. Finally, he crosses by the Stepping Stones, which correspond with the similar incident in the Hung Ceremony.

If the Three Dots ritual is correct, this procedure signifies that the Fiery Ditch separates the dismal part of the Underworld from the Elysian Fields, and corresponds with the Bridge in St. Patrick's Purgatory. The Market Place, therefore, is part of the Isle of the Blest and not part of the City of the Gods, which stands on Their sacred Mountain. In order to reach that final stage the candidate has to cross the gulf which separates Paradise from the central mountain, but he cannot use the Bridge of the Gods, here called the Bridge of Two Planks, and so, like Thor, has to wade, or rather, go by stepping stones.

If we accept this key it means that there are, or should be, at least three Bridges, one into the Underworld, which may cross Water *or* Fire; one over the Pit of Suffering, where the evil lie in torment, which ends in the Elysian Fields, or Paradise; and one linking Paradise with the High Heavens, which are on the top of the Mountain of the Gods. This last Bridge is the Rainbow Bridge of the Gods, and its top is over the centre of their City, while one foot rests on the Mountains of the Dawn and the other on the Mountains of Sunset. This Bridge crosses clouds and ocean and so may be regarded as a Water Bridge.

That these three Bridges should become confused in the popular mind is natural enough, the more so as sometimes one or the other of these places is ringed not by one ditch but by many. For example, Sir Perceval had to cross twenty-one bridges on his journey to the Castle of King Fisherman, and on the other hand Dante says that the central portion of Hell was ringed nine times by one of the Underground Rivers.

In the ritual of the *Three Dots Brotherhood* we can identify the last two bridges, but it is not quite clear in the Traditional History of the Hung Society whether the Fiery Bridge which appeared in the flaming monastery is meant to symbolise the Bridge into, or out of, Hell; probably one of these bridges has become lost and the remaining two have divided its attributes between them. In the case of the ritual itself, however, the Bridge outside the Lodge represents that into the Underworld, crossing the Fiery Ditch symbolises that out of the Underworld into Paradise, which, though a pleasant place, is not the City of the Gods, for the latter can only be reached by crossing, not the Bridge on which stand the three Buddhas, but by means of the Stepping Stones.

As we are told that the Bridge of Iron and Brass once had three planks, but one was removed by Ts'ing, this may be a hint that the Bridge of the Gods ceased to be available for man when he fell from Grace. In other words,

A CUP OF RHINOCEROS HORN
(Showing Buddhist and Taoist Emblems).

Heaven, Earth and Man in Union are Perfect, but Man while in the flesh is imperfect, and so cannot pass freely from Heaven to Earth and back again. Only when he has achieved union with the Supreme Being and become a Buddha can he use that Bridge once more. We are not told of what material the missing plank was made, but those which remain are brass and iron. The former, or copper as it is sometimes called, is the gold, or red colour, of the Sun, which embodies the Yang principle, while iron corresponds with the dark colour of Earth, or Yin, and we thus find in the substance of which the Bridge is made support for the view that the Bridge of the Buddhas can be used by no man until he, too, has become a Buddha. When he has finished his mystical journey and has returned whence he came, he can, if he chooses, descend to earth as a Buddha, or Salvator, to help others on the way. Until then he must cross this last barrier by faith, more especially faith in the *Three Previous Things* of Buddhism—Buddha, the Law and the Assembly. When we remember the great stress laid on faith by the devotees of Amitabha, we shall realise that this explanation is a most probable one.

We may therefore conclude that both keys are needed when dealing with the various Bridges which appear in these legends and Rites, since neither by itself would give us a complete solution. Geographically there should be at least three Bridges, but sometimes these have been amalgamated so as to disguise their true characteristic, whereas at other times they have been reduplicated almost beyond recognition. We can say, however, that a Fiery Bridge is in some way linked with the Underworld, and can never lead higher than Paradise, while that which joins Paradise and Heaven is always the Water Bridge. Therefore if the last Bridge in a journey is over Fire we know that the hero has not reached the City of the Gods, but only an intermediate stage, however pleasant his surroundings.

Unfortunately, we cannot say that the converse is true, for although the Bridge into the Underworld is often over Water, sometimes it is over fire, but usually the details connected with this Bridge will help us to decide whether it is in the Underworld or not. In order to clear up the use of such phrases as the Underworld, Hell, Purgatory, Paradise, and Heaven, it may be well to say that here the Underworld means the place where the dead are supposed to reside, whether good or bad, and may include the Elysian Fields, or Paradise. This is definitely the case in Virgil's account. Hell and Purgatory imply suffering, and are part of the Underworld, whereas Paradise means a pleasant place, even if it is in the Underworld, although often it seems to be situated on the Mountains which serve as the Mountains of Dawn, or occasionally of Sunset. Heaven is the dwelling place of the Gods and is situated on top of the Holy Mountain. It is high above the visible earth, among the clouds, and can only be reached by crossing the space which lies between the Mountains of Dawn, or of Sunset, and this Central Mountain,

MAGICAL USES OF THE BRIDGE.

In view of the prominent part that a Bridge, or Bridges, plays in the supposed journey of the deceased, it is not surprising to find that certain definitely magical ceremonies connected with the Bridge occur in many parts of the worlds. Several examples of these have been referred to in Volume II, the most important being the fire-walking ceremonies in India and Fiji, but similar ceremonies occur in China. In that country during ceremonies intended to drive away evil spirits, particularly those who cause plagues, it is customary for the exorcist to climb a ladder, or cross a *Bridge* made of swords, the latter being called, *To Kio*. Often the onlookers follow the exorcist along this bridge, which is formed of sword-blades, set on edge, thrust through two parallel poles of wood. Just as there is an exorcist's Bridge, so the Hung ceremony of passing through fire is also practised by members of this profession. A fire of charcoal is made in front of the Temple, and over, and through this the exorcist thrusts a rolled up mat, which opens "a Fire Path" through the fire and forms, as it were, a Bridge, over which not only the Ministrant but the onlookers solemnly march. As a result of walking on this *Fire Bridge*, or of crossing the *Sword Bridge*, the participants are supposed to be made immune from the plague, or protected from the attacks of evil spirits.[a]

We thus have both a Bridge and a Fire Path ceremony, and may well consider that these symbolically represent the crossing of a Water Bridge and of a Bridge of Fire in the Underworld, just as they do in the Hung ceremony. The Fire ceremony is, of course, parallel with similar ceremonies in India and Fiji,[b] and although combined with them is the belief in the purifying effect of fire, it is impossible to ignore their connection with the tradition that the soul must cross the Fiery Pit on its way to Paradise, for, in a sense, that Pit is, of course, a place of purification.

THE SOLAR BARQUE.

Having thus dealt with the Bridges, let us now turn to the question of the Solar Barque and the Barque of Souls. To a large extent these seem to be synonymous, for the basic idea is that the Sun passes through the Underworld in his Solar Barque and on the journey is joined by the souls. That it is the Sun they follow is shown by the account given by the natives of Hervey Island, for therein the souls fly up to meet the sun and accompany him in his journey across the terrestial sky. From some legends it appears that when the Solar Barque entered the Underworld the evil souls were compelled to leave his ship and had to make their way through that darksome place as best they could.

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *Religious System of China*, Part VI., pp. 1290 sq.

(b) *The Hung Society*, Vol. II., p. 3.

In the case of Jonah it would appear as if he knew that he should never have embarked on the boat, and that in consequence of his presence the SolarBarque could make no progress until he was cast overboard.

That the Hung Boat is the Solar Barque appears from several facts connected therewith, although we need only specify three. (1) The most precious thing thereon was a Pure White Pearl, which, as we have shown, represents the Sun.[a] (2) The colours of the signals are red, which is the colour allotted to the Sun. (3) It has twelve keels, which are an allusion to the twelve signs of the Zodiac within which the *Pure White Pearl*, or Sun, always moves. Therefore, so far as the Hung ritual is concerned the Solar Barque and the Boat of Souls are identical.

There are, however, legends wherein the two conceptions seem to have become divorced, and of these the American story of the stone canoes[b] is typical. In this legend, as in the beliefs of the Indians of Central America,[c] there is not even a hint that the Sun travels in the canoe with the soul, nor can we definitely prove that such a belief ever existed. In view of these facts it is dangerous to be dogmatic, but it may be that the *canoe* motif is a Ferry Boat in the process of developing into the Solar Barque. In the story of *The Warrior Who Sought His Wife*, the Ferry Boat motif is fairly clear, but in the beliefs current in Central America the canoe can hardly be regarded as merely a Ferry Boat and so an alternative to a Bridge. The soul goes a long journey up, not across, a river, and when it meets the Manitou does not disembark but continues up the branch of the river indicated by him until it reaches the Elysian Fields. Herein it corresponds exactly with the Hung Boat, which likewise goes for a lengthy voyage along a river. Therefore, since we cannot treat this canoe as a Ferry Boat, and cannot regard it as the Boat of the Sun, we must recognise it as a Boat of Souls. Neither is it unique, for some of the Voyages of the Soul in the Pacific seem to belong to this type. Under such circumstances we can but note the fact and suggest that these "Boats of the Soul" are Boats which might develop into the Solar Barque.

For our purpose, however, which is that of unravelling the meaning of the Hung ritual, we have shown that the Hung Boat is the Solar Barque, which also bears the souls of those whom Kwan Yin has saved to the abode of bliss. It is therefore in striking analogy with the Egyptian Boat of Ra, wherein the souls accompanied the Sun and his attendant Deities through the Underworld to the Elysian Fields of Osiris. There is one possibility, however, which is worth bearing in mind; these Boats of the Soul may be, as it were, tenders to the great Solar Barque, whereby the individual sets out to join the Ship of the Sun. If so the souls would arrive at the Western rim of the world and there

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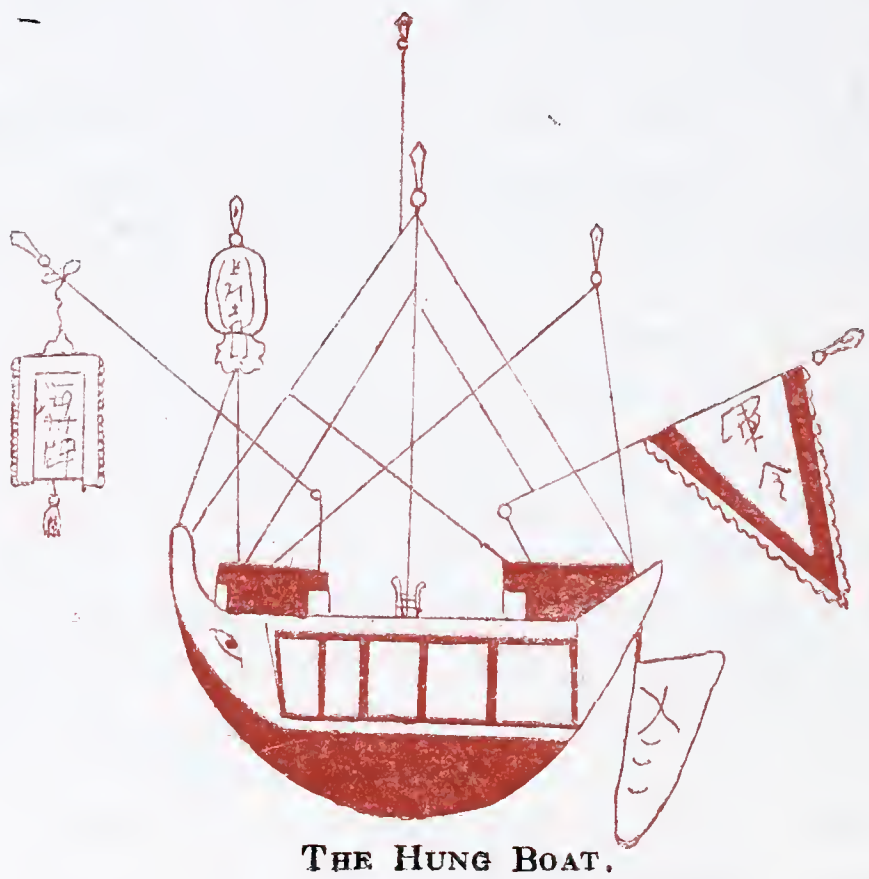
(a) Vol. I., p. 85 sq..

(b) Vol. II., p. 75.

(c) Vol. II., pp. 77.

seek to be admitted to the Solar Barque. If successful, their troubles would then be at an end, and safe on board they could travel securely through the Underworld, whereas those who were rejected would have to go on foot, and possibly never come out on the other side. Early Christian references to the Church as a ship exist, which seem to suggest that only those who travelled in *her* ship could hope to reach Paradise, and the ship as an emblem is often found in the Catacombs at Rome.[a] May it not be that herein we have a Christian attempt to spiritualise an old pre-Christian belief?

(a) See illustration Vol. II. p. 178.



THE HUNG BOAT.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OATH OF BLOOD BROTHERHOOD.

THE Oath of Blood Brotherhood is very widespread, being found among races in all parts of the world. The ceremony differs according to the race, but the most common are the blending of blood and the drinking of blood. In the Hung ritual it is the latter form which is used and it is possible that this is the earliest mode. My reason for thinking so is that by this means each blood brother acquires a definite control over the life principle of the other.

In previous chapters we have seen that if you can obtain a lock of hair, a nail paring, or even the reflection of a person, you thereby acquire a control over his life by means of Sympathetic Magic, and if needs be can inflict suffering or death upon your victim. Now among all primitive races blood is regarded as containing the life of its owner, and it was for this very reason that the Jewish code forbade the eating of flesh with blood in it. It is natural also that certain qualities should be attached to the blood, more especially bravery. For this reason some savage tribes make the members of a war party suck blood from the bravest member, and the same idea often underlies cannibalism, as, for example, among the Maoris, who ate a brave foe in order to acquire his courage.

Under such circumstances the original magical idea underlying the pricking of a candidate's finger, the mingling of the blood thus obtained with that of the other members, and the drinking of the mixture by all assembled, would be that each man present henceforth possessed within himself a particle of the life principle of every other member of the Lodge. It will be remembered that the old members as well as the new had to prick their fingers, and thus the ceremony is reciprocal, unlike those other ceremonies, such as cutting a lock of the candidate's hair, whose object is to place the initiate at the mercy of the Lodge. On the one hand every member of the Lodge now has a hold on the candidate, but on the other hand he has an equal hold on them, and, moreover, any harm done to him is liable to injure that particle of each other member which the candidate henceforward carries within him. Thus by this simple process the self-interest of all the other members is joined to any altruistic sentimental feelings they may be supposed to feel towards the new initiate. Clearly, if the initiate is murdered by some outsider, all the life hostages of the rest which are in his body in the form of minute particles of their blood are liable to perish also, or, his corpse may be taken by the murderer

and appropriate magical ceremonies performed with a view to injuring the surviving members of the Lodge. Thus we have an adequate reason why the other brethren should hasten to avenge his death and punish the murderer, and also a very practical reason why they should be careful to see that every brother is properly buried. Sentimental regard for each other is thus artfully blended with self-interest by the comparatively simple process of drinking each other's blood.

I have previously pointed out that although Westerners can afford to laugh at magic, among a nation such as the Chinese, where most people believe in it, fear may easily bring about the results which the credulous believe will be caused by the various processes of black magic, and so we are justified in believing that even now considerations such as these are probably not lacking to encourage a conscientious carrying out of the obligations of blood brotherhood. If this be so we shall perceive that the oath of blood brotherhood is no empty form, or mere ritual practice, but a very practical method of securing loyalty as well as of ensuring due regard to all the reciprocal duties which the obligation implies. It is certainly significant that in addition to an oath invoking the High Gods there is this separate oath of blood brotherhood. The former may or may not be avenged by the gods if broken, but a breach of the oath of blood brotherhood automatically puts everyone in jeopardy.

BLOOD AND WINE.

The fact that the blood is mingled with wine may at first sight appear to be due to a natural desire to make the somewhat repugnant drink more palatable, but we should be almost certainly wrong in accepting this as the explanation. The use of wine to symbolise blood is widespread and arises from the idea that it is the blood of the vine and contains its Spirit. Hence intoxication was considered to be inspiration by the Spirit of the vine. Later, when men became more civilised, wine was substituted for real blood in sacramental use, but to have eliminated the blood of the candidate and members would have been to destroy the magical efficacy of the Rite. It seems, probable, however, that the use of wine indicates a sacramental as well as a magical principle in the ceremony, for it should be noted that the Chinese do not normally drink fermented wine, they use the distilled juice of certain fruits. Its survival here, and in the Libations to the Banners, indicates that it has been preserved as an old ritual practice, probably because of its resemblance to blood, long after it ceased to be an everyday article of food. In this connection the fact is worth remembering that in ancient Greece, among the Baccantes, wine was thought to be the blood of the god Bacchus, whose devotees thus fed on their god. We have seen for other reasons that Wan Yun Lung has many similarities to a vegetation, or tree, god and to other dying gods found in various parts of the world. That he has been humanised is true, but so have other dying gods, and

be he originally god or man it seems more than probable that the wine mingled with the blood represents symbolically the blood of Wan Yun Lung, poured out for the brotherhood, and that in drinking thereof the members of the Lodge not only commemorate his death, but renew their blood brotherhood with him, just as they do with the candidate, while the latter is thus linked with the great hero of the Hung Society.

Having discussed the magical significance of the drinking of blood it seems desirable briefly to discuss the alternative method. This is by the mingling of blood, and from the magical standpoint cannot be regarded as so efficacious as the former. It probably indicates a later development, due to a certain natural repugnance to drink human blood which grew up when races were becoming more civilised. To English speaking people the Rite as performed among our Teutonic ancestors will perhaps prove the most interesting, and we will therefore deal with this first,

BLOOD BROTHERHOOD AMONG THE TEUTONIC RACES.

Apparently among the Norse there were at least two methods of taking this oath, for we learn from the *Elder Edda* that at a banquet of the gods to which Loki had not been invited he appeared and reproached Odin for not having invited him, reminding him that they twain had sworn the oath of blood brotherhood, using these words:—

"Father of slaughter, Odin, say,
Rememberest not the former day,
When ruddy in the goblet stood,
For mutual drink, our blended blood?
Rememberest not, thou then did swear,
The Festive banquet ne'er to share,
Unless thy brother Lok was there?[a]

This form of the oath, it will be noted, is much nearer to that found in the Hung ceremony than is that which was more generally practised among the Teutonic races, namely, the *mingling* of blood.

William Morris [b] gives a detailed and accurate description of such a ceremony, despite the fact that he puts it into his usual beautiful verse, which runs as follows:—

Now it fell on a day of the Spring-tide that followed on these things,
That Sigurd fares to the meadows with Gunnar and Hogni the kings;
For afar is Guttorm the youngest, and he sails the Eastern Seas,
And fares with war shield hoisted to win him fame's increase.
So come the Kings to the Doom-ring, and the people's Hallowed Field,
And no dwelling of man is anigh it, and no acre forced to yield:

(a) H. C. Trumbull, D.D., *The Blood Covenant*, p. 41.

(b) *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung*, 4th ed., 1887, p. 204.

There stay those Kings of the people alone in weed of war,
And they cut a strip of the greensward on the meadow's daisied floor,
And loosen it clean in the midst, while its ends in the earth abide;
Then they heave its midmost aloft, and set on either side
An ancient spear of battle writ round with words of worth;
And these are the posts of the door, whose threshold is of the earth,
And the skin of the earth is its lintel; but with war glaives gleaming bare
The Niblung Kings and Sigurd beneath the earth yoke fare;
They each an arm-vein openeth, and their blended blood falls down,
On Earth the fruitful Mother where they rent her turfy gown:
And then, when the blood of the Volsungs hath run with the Niblung blood,
They kneel with their hands upon it and swear the brotherhood:
Each man at his brother's bidding to come with the blade in his hand,
Though the fire and the flood should sunder, and the very gods withstand:
Each man to love and cherish his brother's hope and will;
Each man to avenge his brother when the Norns his fate fulfil;
And now they are foster brethren, and in such wise have they sworn
As the God-born Goths of aforetime, when the world was newly born.

It should be noted that because Guttorm was away and did not take the oath of blood brotherhood, afterwards he thought himself free treacherously to murder Sigurd. With regard to the ceremony itself the first point to note is that it is a symbolical rebirth. The yoke is merely a similitude of the Vesica Piscis, and the three pass through a symbolical rebirth from Mother Earth. Therein they are like the Hung brethren, who boast that they are born from the same womb. The mingling of the blood together is in order to produce a composite mixture, whereon each swears on his own life principle, as well as on that of the others, and implies that they are so intermingled that the one life principle cannot be distinguished from the other. It is, however, symbolical and not magical, for those taking the obligation do not absorb into themselves any particle of the others, and they therefore do not gain control of the other, or he of them, neither does an injury done to one of them directly affect a portion of the others, as would be the case if they had drunk each other's blood. It is therefore not nearly as efficacious a method of ensuring fidelity to an oath, and, as subsequent events proved, Gunnar and Hogni did not hesitate to enter into a conspiracy with Guttorm to murder the man whom they had promised to protect and befriend. It is true that they hesitated to deal the stroke themselves, either from superstition or from a curiously twisted sense of honour, which permitted them to send their brother to perform the crime from which they themselves shrank. Had they, however, drunk the blood and believed in the magical efficacy of the act, they would probably have feared to perpetrate the crime, lest in injuring Sigurd they injured themselves.

A definitely historical example of such a ceremony is recorded by Anderson[a] who tells us that in one of the Icelandic Sagas, Thorstein proferred blood brotherhood to Angantyr, Jarl of the Orkneys, and that the ceremony was duly performed in a manner similar to that described by William Morris.

It will thus be seen that this form of the oath of blood brotherhood marks a distinct development away from the magic and into the region of symbolism, and perhaps religion. The real efficacy of such an oath would rest in the belief that Mother Earth would avenge the violation of the oath which had been sworn in her name, and not from the fear that in breaking the oath you would injure yourself. The fact that the blood of all three was poured upon the bare earth so that it might soak in, shows that those taking the obligation were propitiating the Great Mother and calling her to witness, by sacrificing their life principle to her. It was she, therefore, and not each man, who held a particle of blood as a hostage. That this practice is widespread will be well known to most of my readers, and I need only remind them that we get constant references in the Old Testament to the pouring out of the life blood of a victim when registering an oath, but in such cases it is the blood of an animal, and not of the person taking the obligation. On the other hand we must not forget that the Priests of Cybele gashed themselves and besprinkled the altar and the ground with their own blood, and Cybele, of course, is one form of the Earth Mother.[b]

IN ASIA.

When we turn to Asia we find both in ancient and modern times the oath of blood brotherhood firmly established. Thus Trumbull [c] gives a detailed account of such an oath in Syria. One of the "friends took a sharp lancet and opened a vein in the arm. Into the opening thus made he inserted a quill, through which he sucked the living blood. The lancet blade was carefully wiped on one of the duplicate covenant papers, and then it was taken by the other friend, who made a like incision in its first user's arm and drank his blood through the quill, wiping the blade on the duplicate covenant-record. . . Each blood-marked covenant record was then folded carefully, to be sewed up in a small leathern case, or amulet, about an inch square; to be worn thenceforward by each of the covenant brothers, suspended about the neck, or bound upon the arm, in token of the indissoluble relation."

Often in such cases a sister of a blood brother is regarded as the sister of his friend, and marriage between the two is forbidden as incestuous. This fact is in striking analogy with the rule prohibiting the marriage of a Hung brother's widow with another Hung brave.

(a) *Viking Tales of the North*, p. 59.

(b) See J. S. M. Ward, *Who Was Hiram Abiff?* p. 68.

(c) H. C. Trumbull, *The Blood Covenant*, p. 5.

There is clear evidence that the ancient Jews also entered into this form of relationship, for the term for making a covenant between parties literally translated is "to cut a covenant." Thus Jonathan cut a covenant with the House of David.[a]

Herodotus[b] also describes the form of the blood brotherhood as carried out among the Arabs of his day, and the same authority relates[c] that the Scythians poured wine into a drinking bowl and mingled with it the blood of those entering into the bond, who cut themselves with a knife or sword. They then dipped their weapons into this mixture, invoked a curse on any who would break the covenant, and then all present drank the wine and blood.

Moving nearer to China, we find the custom well established in Burma, more especially among the Karens who inhabit the frontier near Western China. The method varies somewhat in different parts. One procedure is to draw blood from the thigh of each of the would-be brothers, mingle it together and then each dip his finger in the blood, apply it to his lips and lick it.[d] Sometimes, however, the blood is drunk completely. Thus in an account given by the Rev. Dr. M. H. Bixby he says that the chief of the Gecho tribe asked him to prove his friendship by drinking *truth* with him. " 'Well, what is drinking truth?' I said. In reply, he said; 'This is our custom. Each chief pierces his arm—draws blood—mingles it in a vessel with whiskey, and drinks of it; both promising to be true and faithful to each other, down to the seventh generation.'

"After the chiefs had drunk of the mingled blood and whiskey each one of their followers drank of it also, and were thereby included in the covenant of friendship.

"A company of Shans laid a plot to kill me and my company in Shanland, for the purpose of plunder. They entered into covenant with each other by drinking the blood of their leader mingled with whiskey, or a kind of beer made from rice."[e]

In Borneo the same custom is found and the Rev. W. Medhurst relates how the Dayaks entered into a blood covenant with him by drawing blood from the arm of each party, mingling it in a glass of water and then drinking from the glass, after which they joined hands and kissed.[f]

The Kayans, who live in the same island, not only drink blood but sometimes adopt rather an unusual method, for they smear the blood on a small cigarette and then each party smokes it.[g]

(a) I. Sam. 20; 13-17.

(b) *Hist.* iii., 8.

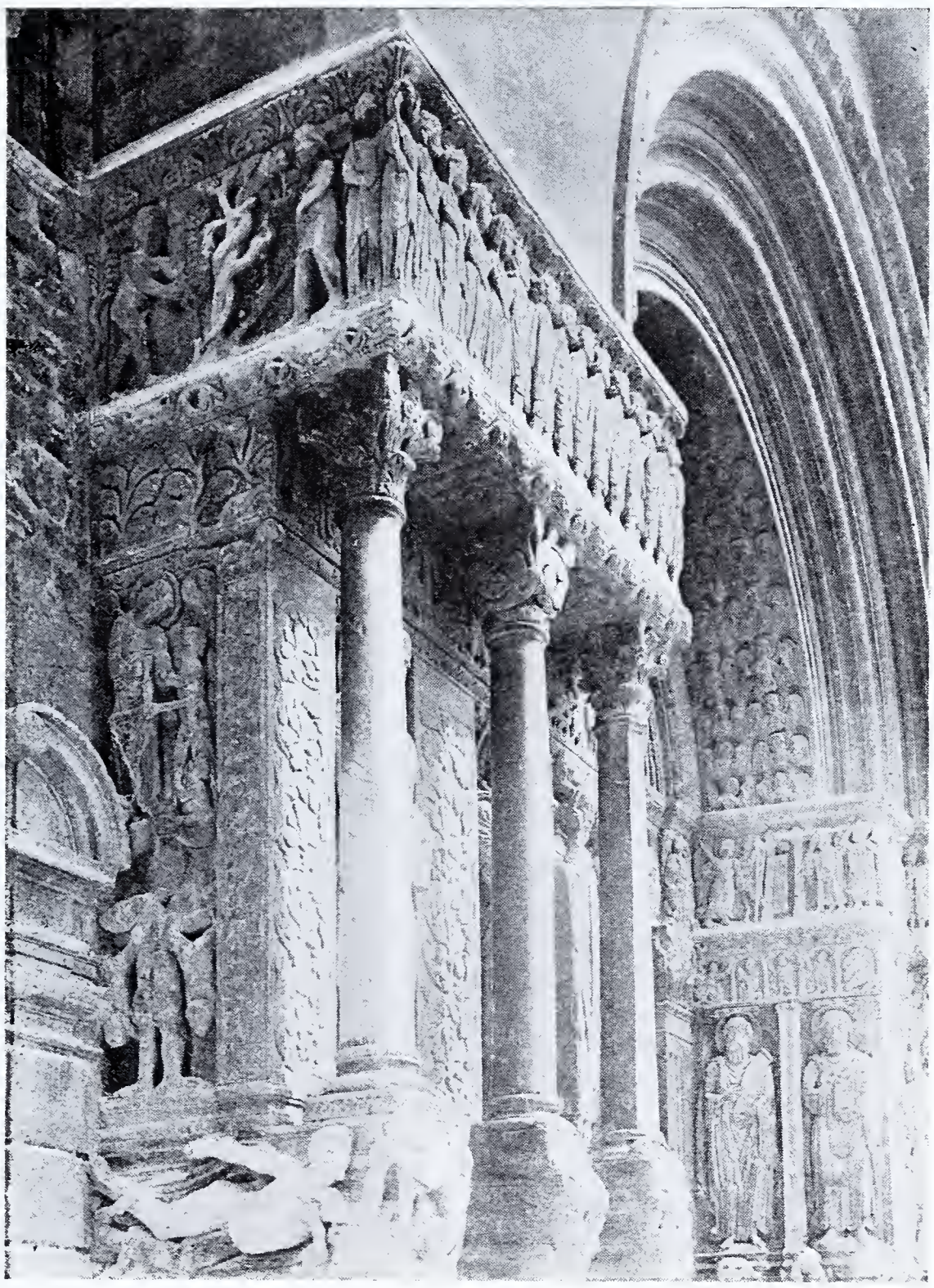
(c) *Hist.* iv., 70.

(d) H. C. Trumbull, *The Blood Covenant*, p. 313.

(e) Ibid. 316.

(f) Ellis, *History of Madagascar*, I., p. 191 note.

(g) S. St. John, *Life in the Forests of the Far East*, I., 116.



ST MICHAEL WEIGHING SOULS.
(From St. Trophime's Church, Arles).

In Timor the arms are slashed and the blood collected into a bamboo, mingled with gin or palm-wine and then drunk, but not all is thus disposed of, and what is left over is taken out to some secluded spot; a fig tree is planted and on it is hung a bamboo receptacle into which the remainder of the liquid is poured. Then each swears "If I be false, and be not a true friend, may my blood issue from my mouth, ears, and nose, as it does from this bamboo!" So saying, they prick a hole in the bamboo to enable the blood to escape, which naturally runs down the tree, staining it. The tree is then left to grow as a standing witness to the covenant.[a]

The cursing formula is in striking analogy with certain penalties found in the Hung Rite, and how close is the union thus created is proved by the fact that if one friend visits the other everything in his home, including even his wife, is equally the property for the time being of the blood-brother.

IN AFRICA.

From Africa numerous examples of this custom could be quoted, but two or three must suffice. In Madagascar the ceremony not only consisted of drawing blood by making a slight cut in the centre of the bosom, but, as in the Hung ceremony, it was associated with the killing of a fowl. The bird's head was nearly cut off and it was left to continue bleeding during the ceremony, while the two friends recited a long formula, which included both the vow itself and a blasting curse on whoever should prove false thereto. When this was finished the blood was actually drunk from the wounds in the bosoms and the fowl was despatched at the south-west corner of the hearth.[b]

While exploring the Congo, Stanley entered into the oath of blood brotherhood with a most formidable list of chiefs, but as the procedure appears to have been practically always exactly the same, that adopted when he made peace with the Bangala will serve as an example.[b] The ceremony took place in the presence of the whole tribe, numbering some two thousand persons, at Iboko. The Fetish man, who was in charge of the proceedings, first scraped the spear of Kokoro, the heir to the Chieftancy, who was representing his father, Mata Bwyki, he then scraped the stock of Stanley's rifle and mingled the scrapings and a pinch of salt with a little dust from the long pod. Then the white man's arm was crossed over that of the Bangala, an incision was made in each arm, and over the blood was dropped a few grains of the dusty mixture. After this the white man's arm was rubbed over that of Kokoro so that the blood could mingle. This ceremony complete, Mata Bwyki, proclaimed perpetual peace and friendship between Stanley and his tribe. Altogether Stanley says that he entered into blood brotherhood at one time or another with fully fifty chiefs.

(a) Forbes, *A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago*, p. 452.

(b) Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent*, II., 297-302.

These and many other examples which might have been quoted show how universal is the custom of blood brotherhood, and it should be particularly noted that in the vast majority of cases the ceremony consists in either drinking the blood, which seems to be the more ancient form, or in mingling it.

A BROTHER'S WIDOW.

The peculiarly binding nature of the Hung oath of Blood Brotherhood is attested by the rule that if a brother die no member of the Hung Society may marry his widow. The penalty attached for a breach of this is exceedingly severe, as will be seen from oath 17, which runs as follows:[a]

"If a Brother dies and leave behind him a wife and she desires to marry again, a Brother may not take her as his wife. Thus the brethren must be very careful in making enquiries before they marry. If any be so daring as to disobey this law, may he be blasted by five lightnings and his body be scattered here and there for ever."

The penalty implies that he cannot be properly buried, a most severe punishment in the eyes of a Chinese. With regard to the offence itself, it must be remembered that the ideal wife in China refuses to marry again, in order that she may ultimately come to her husband as he left her. Indeed, at one time it was considered meritorious in China for a widow to commit suicide, although nothing like the same pressure was applied as was formerly the case in India. It was, however, always considered by the Chinese as rather an insult to the dead man if his wife married a second time, and such marriages were usually regarded with disapproval. Therefore for a Hung brother to marry the widow of a fellow member would be to inflict a definite injury upon the dead man. But over and above this was the decisive factor that a Blood Brother was considered closer akin than one born from the same earthly mother and therefore such a marriage would be regarded as incestuous, as is often the case among other races.

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a) Vol. I., p. 67.

CHAPTER X.

THE MULTIPLE SOUL.

(Ts'ing versus Ming).

ACCORDING to the Chinese the first subdivision of man is into *Kwei* and *Shen*. In the *Ll-ki* Confucius is reported to have said, "The Khi (breath) is the full manifestation of the *Shen* and the P'oh is the full manifestation of the *Kwei*; the union of the Kwei and the Shen is the highest among tenets. Living beings are all sure to die, and as they certainly return (Kwei) to the Earth after their death, the soul (which accompanies them thither) is called Kwei. But while the bones and flesh moulder in the grave and mysteriously become earth of the fields, the Khi issues forth and manifests itself on high as a shining *Ming* (light)."[(a)]

In short, the Kwei represents the soul which remains in the tomb, and to which offerings have to be made on the Chinese "All Souls' Day," whereas the Shen, which we are elsewhere told comes from Yang and Heaven, is Divine, and on death, having disentangled itself from its grosser human characteristics, becomes a shining *Ming*, or *Celestial Spirit*. We also see that the baser earthly personality has its full manifestation as P'oh, while "the energy of the Shen operating in the living human body was denoted in China, except by the Khi, or breath, by the special term *Hwun*. It is the Li-ki again which teaches us this. We read 'that . . . . the grandee Ki-Tsze . . . . on burying his son . . . . bared the left side of his body when the mound was finished, and moving to the right, walked round it, howling three times, and then he exclaimed,—that the bones and flesh should return to earth is ordained of fate; but the *Hwun* or *Khi* can go everywhere . . . . ' In another section of the same work (Ch. 38, 1. 27) we read; 'the *Hwun*, or *Khi*, returns to Heaven; the body and the *P'oh* return to the Earth.'"[(b)]

We thus have two souls, one which is truly immortal, the *Shen*, consisting of Yang substance and therefore divine. At death this becomes a celestial being of light, called *Ming*. The other, the *Kwei*, consists of Yin substance and is of the earth, earthy, whither it ultimately returns. It does not however immediately vanish at death but maintains a precarious existence for some time in the tomb and, according to numerous legends, can sally forth, and if

(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Part IV., pp. 3 sq..

(b) J. J. M. de Groot, *Ibid*, Part IV., pp. 4 sq.

evilly, disposed injure human beings. Sacrifices and offerings are made to both these souls and are mentioned by Confucius.[a]

But in addition to these two constituent parts there is a third, which binds the others together, and this was the *Ts'ing*, or vital force.[b] We gather that at, or even before, birth the Kwei or animal soul is clearly manifest. In the Tso Ch'wen we read that "when a man is born, the first thing that develops in him is what we call his P'oh; after the P'oh is produced, we denote the Yang (Celestial) substance (that is in him) by the name of Hwun. Things of all sorts and kinds being subsequently handled by him, his *Ts'ing* increases, his *Hwun* and *P'oh* being thereby strengthened; and as a consequence he obtains a *Ts'ing* perfectly sound and vigorous and in the end a *Shen* or *Ming*."[c] This Ts'ing, or vital force, cannot survive independently of his animal soul, or P'oh, and his Spirit, or Hwun.[1]

The Chinese, however, from the earliest ages have loved to play on words, and since, their language being monosyllabic, they often have different characters with similar sounds, they can produce a curious play on words which in the West would be called "punning," but in China is done in all seriousness. In the earlier volumes of this book attention has already been drawn to this tendency, which enables the Hung ritual to be translated in a mystical and also in a political sense, but a similar process produces still further meanings. We saw that *Ming* might mean either the *Ming Dynasty* or *Light*, but readers will now realise that it can mean the *Divine Spark in Man*, or, *his Spirit*. In like manner *Ts'ing* not only means the *Manchu* but also *darkness*, or rather, the *material universe*. We also perceive that it means the *Vital Force in man*, and so the *Soul* as manifested forth in the bonds of matter. But even still its alternative explanations are by no means exhausted.

THE WORD TS'ING.

In the *Poh Hu T'ung I*,[d] written during the first century A.D., by Pan Ku, we are told of several of these meanings in which, though the form of the character used differed somewhat, the pronunciation was very similar. Of these the five following deserve particular mention:—

Ts'ing, means, vital force.
Ts'ing, means, the passions.
Sing, means, innate natural character.
Ts'ing, means, stillness.
Sing or Sheng, means, birth.

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[1]The Chinese also have a word *Ling* which means, *the effective operation of the Ts'ing*, or its manifestation, which is often translated as *soul*.

(a)J. J. M. de Groot, *Ibid.*, Part IV., p. 7.

(b)*Ibid.*, p. 9.

(c)*Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

(d)*Ibid.*, Part IV., p. 17.

We thus see that the Hung ritual contains numerous subtle references, and the phrase, *Overthrow Ts'ing and restore Ming* can mean, *Crush your passions and exalt the spiritual side of your nature*. There is also a definite link between the two souls consisting of the Ts'ing, or vital principle, but Taoist metaphysicians were not content with this modest number. In their opinion the two souls were multiple in nature, and the total spiritual organisation of each man consisted of at least fifteen parts. His Hwun consisted of three parts, his P'oh of seven parts, and since each of his five Viscera had a separate Shen he had in all fifteen sub-souls.[(a)] In the three Hwun we no doubt get the three souls of the usual Chinese obsequies. The lower Hwun being connected with the Kwei, or Tomb Soul, the middle Hwun took up its residence in the Ancestral Tablets, while the higher Hwun, having severed all connection with the other two and gathered around it the highest spiritual elements in man, entered Heaven as a glorious Ming (Light).

The continual sub-divisions and reshufflings of the constituent parts of the human soul are most perplexing to the Western mind and difficult to follow, but these facts indicate the true significance of the mysterious fifteen puzzle which so often appears in Triad Certificates This is a table consisting of three lines of three numbers, ranging from one to nine, so placed that however added the total is always fifteen.[(b)] We now perceive that this puzzle symbolises man, whose fifteen souls, however arranged, form the complete man. It will also be remembered that the total number of Founders of the Hung League, as set out in the Traditional History, consisted of fifteen individuals, who were *gathered together in groups*. In like manner, according to the Taoists, as the foetus develops in the womb first Ts'ing appears, then the tripartate, Hwun, then the septem partate, P'oh, and finally, the Five Elements are distributed through the Viscera to enable the Shen to dwell therein.[(c)] Although in the Hung ritual the Society grows by groups of five, five, three and two, instead of three, seven and five, we cannot doubt that there is a reference to this fundamental belief, and that herein we have an allegory of the descent of the soul into matter at the call of the Ts'ing, and therefore of its wandering and exile, far from its spiritual home, in Heaven, here depicted as the Shiu Lam Monastery.[1] The fifteenth day of the month, to which we also get references in the ritual, may likewise be connected with the fifteen constituent souls of man, even though it mainly refers to the full moon, for among many races that luminary is considered to be a symbol of the soul.

Of these various souls the five Shen of the Viscera are peculiarly interesting, since Taoist Sages declare that sometimes they assume bodily shape and can be

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[1]It is certainly a curious coincidence, if indeed it is a coincidence, that in the Masonic legend we also have fifteen people who go on a journey in three groups in search of something.

(a)J. J. M. de Groot, *Ibid.*, Part IV., p. 70.

(b)See *The Hung Society*, Vol. I., p. 135.

(c)J. J, M. de Groot, *Ibid.*, Part IV., p. 62, quoting Lao-tsze in *Nei Kivan King*.

seen, not only by strangers, but even by their owners. Sometimes these shapes are those of fabulous beasts, but often they appear as men, and in such cases their appearance preludes the death of their owner.[a] They are thus like the five senses in the Christian Mediæval Morality play, *Everyman*, where they appear to him just before he enters the grave. When such beliefs as these are current, it is hardly surprising that the Hung Society should attempt to symbolise the experience of the human soul in a legend wherein certain individuals correspond with the various parts of the soul, and these facts will help us to discover the true meaning of many incidents in the Traditional History, more especially we shall perceive the full significance of the constantly reiterated phrase, *Overthrow Ts'ing and restore Ming*.

(a) See J. J. M. de Groot, *Ibid.*, Part IV., p. 72.

明復清反

Ming-Fuh Ts'ing-Fan.

OVERTHROW TS'ING AND RESTORE MING.

CHAPTER X.

THE FIVE ELEMENTS.

N the last chapter it was shown that in the multiple soul of Chinese metaphysics the five Shen were posited in the five Viscera, and we shall now discover that these five Viscera are correlated with the five elements, which play such an important part in the Hung ceremony, which in their turn are linked with several other important aspects of existence. The Chinese, like the Hindus, and unlike the Western nations, have five, not four, elements and correlate them with the five cardinal points, namely, North, South, East, West and Centre. These elements and cardinal points have also their distinctive colours, and not only are the elements said to preside over the five Viscera, but the latter are regarded as the seats of the five great Chinese virtues. The following table sets out the supposed relation which exists between these groups:—

Viscera.	*Virtue.*	*Elements.*	*Card. Point.*	*Season.*	*Colour.*
Liver.	Benevolence.	Wood.	East.	Spring.	Blue.
Lungs.	Righteousness.	Metal.	West.	Autumn.	White.
Heart.	Ceremonial Perfection.	Fire.	South.	Summer.	Red.
Kidneys.	Knowledge.	Water.	North.	Winter.	Black.
Spleen	Trustworthiness.	Earth.	Centre.		Yellow.[a]

The above curious, and to our minds artificial, correlation of these items is of importance to us, since to some extent it explains the origin of some of the signs of the Five Elements as taught in the Hung Lodge. Thus the *Sign of Water* consists of placing the hands on either side of the body, thereby drawing attention to the kidneys, which correspond with the element of Water. On the other hand, while the *Sign of Earth* does to some extent indicate the position of the spleen it more accurately points to the Solar Plexus, which may be regarded as the centre of man's Body, and so corresponds with the "Cardinal Point" of the centre. Since the world seems to be the centre of the visible universe this is the most probable origin of the sign. But the Sign for Fire in no way indicates the heart, whereas the motion made does suggest flames of fire which leap up and down towards the sky. As fire is also a terrible engine of destruction, this explanation would account for the widespread use of this

[a] See J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*. Part III., p. 967 and Part IV., pp. 18 sq.

sign as a signal of distress. Since the South is the hottest point of the compass in China, its identification with the element of fire is most natural.

So far as the Sign for the element of Metal is concerned, it can hardly be said that this indicates the lungs. The Chinese, however, are often most fanciful in their comparisons and it may be that this is a hint that the breath, which is intimately linked with the spirit, ascends to the golden mansions of Heaven. The Sign for the element of Wood is probably derived from the cross-piece which forms the roof, a most prominent feature in primitive wooden buildings, but it may also be thought to indicate the liver. Perhaps equally important, however, is the fact that it does represent the cross of the Equinox and so would be appropriate either for Spring or Autumn. The fact that the trees bud in Spring is given by the Chinese as the reason why the element of wood is attached to Spring, and therefore the possibility that there is an astrological reference to the Cross of the Spring Equinox cannot be ignored.

THE FIVE CARDINAL VIRTUES.

When we turn to the five cardinal virtues which are connected with the five elements we are bound to admit that the reasons given by the Chinese are somewhat far-fetched. Nevertheless, since among them their acceptation is practically universal, we must recognise the fact that the Signs of the Five Elements have a definite moral and allegorical meaning. Pan Ku, in the *Poh Hu T'ung I*, explains their identification as follows:—

"Why does the liver represent benevolence? Because it consists of the operative energy (Tsing) of the element of wood; for indeed benevolence is the love of living creatures and the East is Yang, and is the region in which all that is endowed with light has its origin. Thus, because the liver symbolises Wood it has a blue colour (like Spring) and also leaves and branches. . . . .

"Why are the lungs identified with righteousness? It is because they consist of the operative energy of the element of metal, righteousness decided the fate of Western regions,[1] and Metal (being identified with the West and consequently with Autumn) brings everything to maturity. Because the lungs symbolise metal, their colour is white (like Autumn) . . . .

"Why does the heart symbolise ceremonial perfection? It is so because that organ consists of the operative energy of the element of Fire. In the South (the region assimulated with fire) the estimatable Yang has the upper hand, while the less estimatable Yin underlies there, and in ceremonial and rites likewise, difference is kept in view between those of high rank and those of low rank. Because the heart thus represents fire its colour is red. . . . .

"Why are the kidneys identified with knowledge? Because they consist of the operative energy of Water. A man that possesses knowledge, whether

[1] Because when righteousness prevails in China the barbarous tribes of the Western frontier are easily kept in order.

he acts or does nothing is never indecisive or in doubt, just the same with water which also never wavers about the direction to follow when in a forward motion. The North being assimulated with Water the kidneys have the black colour (of the North). . . .

"Why is the Spleen identified with Trustworthiness? Because it consists of the operative energy of the element of Earth, which latter applies itself to nourishing all that exists, representing in this way absence of selfishness in producing living beings; and this is trustworthiness in the fullest degree. As the Spleen represents Earth, it has the yellow colour (of this element). . ." [a]

These passages, at any rate, give us an interpretation of the symbolic meaning of the Five Elements and the human organs connected therewith. It will be remembered that almost all the flags of the Hung Society contain the colours of the Five Elements, but is should be noted that green replaces blue. As previously indicated, among the Chinese each of these five organs has a kind of soul of its own, and since the organs are linked with the eyes, nose, mouth, ears, etc., they to some extent correspond with our five physical senses. Therefore one interpretation of the Five Founders, whose flags bear the colour of the Five Elements, is that they represent the five senses in each man. But the Chinese are never content with a piece of simple symbolism like this and so the Five Ancestors also represent other fives which play an important part in their speculation. For example, they may also be considered as representing the five-fold nature of the Soul of man, as taught by the Buddhists, indeed, it may be that the Five Ancestors really represent the Buddhist conception and stand for these five elements in the soul, whereas the five Horse dealers represent the five Shen of the Viscera, which is a Taoist conception.

It is hardly necessary to add that among European astrologers and doctors of medicine in the Middle Ages a similar fantastic correlation existed between the elements and the organs of man, which was complicated by placing various parts of the human body under the control of various planets, signs of the Zodiac, and so forth. On these fanciful associations Mediæval medicine was largely based, and therefore readers of this book will not be surprised to find similar false analogies among the Chinese.

As we have had to refer to the Signs of the Five Elements it is worth drawing attention to the fact that the Sign associated with Fire by the Hung Society is also similarly used to denote distress, and in connection with fire, in the West. A very striking example is shown on a wall painting from Wadi Sarga, depicting The Three Children in the Furnace.[b] It is Coptic work ofthe 6th century and is important since it shows this double association. Neither does it stand alone, for in a glass disc of Roman work found at Cologne, and belonging to the 4th century, A.D., are a series of eight pictures of which three

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(a) J. J. M. de Groot, *The Religious System of China*, Part IV.

(b) See illus., op. p. 94.

show people making this sign. One, which is badly worn, shows The Three Children in the Fiery Furnace. Here we have fear, or distress, because of fire. The next shows Daniel in the Lion's den, whose distress is due to the presence of the fierce beasts, while the third shows mental distress, for it represents the widow of Nain standing over the corpse of her dead child. Among the other pictures are two showing the adventures of Jonah, one being of special interest as it depicts the ship. The original of this glass disc is in the British Museum.[a]

The symbolic use of the Elements in certain Western Rites is probably well known to many readers of this work, and it is certainly a curious coincidence, if it is nothing more, that the same rites lay great stress on the symbolic meaning of numbers, for we find a like peculiarity in the Hung ceremony.

(a) See illus. opposite.

THE HUNG BOAT.
(AS DEPICTED IN ANOTHER CHINESE MS.)

A 4TH CENTURY GLASS DISC FROM COLOGNE.
(Showing the Hung Sign of Fire).

CHAPTER XII.

THE MEANING OF NUMBERS.

FROM very early times various civilised nations have attached certain symbolical meanings to numbers in addition to their use as representing numeration. Probably in no country has the symbolical use of numbers developed to a greater extent than it has in China, and although their interpretation of the symbolical meaning of certain numbers does not always coincide with that followed in the West, in many cases there is an extraordinary identity of interpretation. Since the symbolic meaning of numbers plays a very important part in the inner meaning of the Hung ritual, it is desirable to give here at least the more elementary meanings attached to them by the Chinese, and it will be useful to indicate certain similarities and differences in their use as symbols among other races. With regard to this last point it is only necessary to remember the important, though often baffling, part played by numbers in the Book of Revelations to realise that their use by mystical teachers is very widespread.

NUMBERS 1-3.

Let us, therefore, first deal with the principal numbers in the Chinese system of symbolism. *One* is the symbol of Unity; it is the first of the numerals and the beginning of all calculation, while they aver that 10 is the limit where calculation ends, and so in a sense is a perfect number. The numerals between 1 and 10 are divided between the principles of Yang and Yin, the odd numbers being called *perfect*, and associated with the Yang principle, while the even numbers are regarded as *imperfect*, and as belonging to the Yin principle. "The principle of all doctrine," says Hoai-nan-ytsze, is 1. "One being alone could never beget anything; but it could produce everything as it contains in itself the two principles whose harmony and union produce everything." It will thus be seen that if we accept this system of philosophy the one produces two, the two produce three, and by three all things are created. Therefore the one represents the First Cause, Paramatma, is essentially of the Yang principle and symbolises the Divine Essence.

Two represents the Yin principle, or rather that principle in union with the Yang. It stands for light and darkness, good and bad, male and female, positive and negative. As the Chinese say, it therefore represents the Yin principle, or Earth, which when united with the Yang principle, or Heaven, begets Man, who is thus begotten of the two.

Three stands for the balance between Heaven and Earth, and more especially for Man, who is begotten twixt the two. It is symbolised by the triangle, which plays such an important part in the Triad ceremony and has, indeed, given its name to the Society. The Chinese say that the two sides of the triangle represent Heaven and Earth and the base Man, and if we apply the geometric principle to the numbers one and two we get the dot, or point, representing the one, and the stroke, or line, representing two. Hence the significance of the fact that the soul of the deceased is supposed to take up its residence in the Memorial Tablet at the moment when that Tablet is dotted, for the dot represents the Yang principle, or Spirit.

The Chinese delight in collecting parallels of threes. They point out that three offerings have to be made during the worship of the Ancestors, that there are three kinds of sacrifices, the great, the middle and the inferior, that there are three great Lights—the Sun, Moon, and Stars, a phrase which brings to mind the three lights in Masonry. They likewise declare that there are three bonds, namely, those between the King and the People, the Father and his Children, and the Husband and the Wife. The Buddhists have developed the science of the number three in their own peculiar manner. They speak of the three treasures, which are Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, which represent, Supreme Intelligence, the Law and the Church. Indeed, the use of the number three among the Chinese is almost unlimited. They say that a man has three souls, which they call the San-hwan, and this belief, as we have seen, lies at the very foundation of the Hung ritual. But in every aspect of their lives they attach importance to this number, which to them is of greater significance than any other, and numerous rules and customs are based upon it. Thus they are supposed to mourn for three years for the loss of a parent, and on the other hand if a husband remains away from his wife for three years without giving any indication that he is alive, she is entitled to regard herself as a widow and re-marry. It would be possible to go on enumerating other examples, but perhaps one of the most important aspects of it is the use of the number three as a multiple. For example, the Emperor of China is allowed to have three wives of the first rank, and 3×3, or 9 concubines of the second rank; 3×9, or 27 of the third, and 3×27, or 81 of the fourth. Above all, to them 3 is the number of creation, which fact should be compared with the three who rule a Lodge in Masonry, who in a sense represent the Triune nature of God and man. The creative aspect of the number three in Freemasonry is brought out in the three s....s by which a candidate advances to the Ped. in the first degree.

NUMBERS 4 AND 5.

Four among the Chinese, as in the West, represents Matter and the physical Earth, as distinct from the Earth Principle. It is the square of two, or the Yin principle, and thus represents matter in its grossest form. It is

often depicted by the four-sided square, which symbolises the earth, and the very character used to depict four still retains the four-sided square, into which is inserted the character Pah, which is two sides of a triangle, and means, to *divide* or *separate*. This is no doubt because when separated four resolves itself into two twos, both of them prime numbers, but this fact has developed a secondary meaning of the number four, namely, *separation* in general. The word *Fang*, which means, a *room* or *house*, and is often used for a Triad Lodge, is composed of two characters: Hu, which means, *to protect*, and Fang, which itself means, *a square*. Hence it really means an enclosed square. We therefore understand why it is that the walls of the Hung Lodge are decorated with squares and why the City of Willows itself is square. It thus symbolises the world, but according to some of the rituals this Lodge, or square, is set within the circle of Heaven, thus implying the material universe within the circle of the Infinite. It also means correctness or righteousness.[a]

Five is the number of Shang Ti and also of Tien, Heaven, viewed in a somewhat anthropomorphic sense as God, in contradistinction to the first cause, or Paramatma. Since man is made in the image of God it is not surprising to find that the number five is intimately associated with him, and with everything which closely affects him. He is said to have five intestines:—the stomach, the liver, the heart, the lungs and the kidneys; which are linked with the five Chinese elements—earth, wood fire, metal and water; which in their turn are linked with the five colours—Yellow, green, (or sometimes blue) red, white and black. These in turn are further linked with the five cardinal points, namely, the Centre, the East, the South, the West and the North, and finally the whole are linked up with the five planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn. There are five virtues—humanity, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faith, and five great blessings, namely, long life, riches, health, love or virtue, and a natural death. Numerous other uses of the number five could be quoted and their importance in the Hung ritual has already been noticed. There were the Five Founders, the Five Lodges, and these and the many other fives are clearly utilised to convey a mystical and symbolical meaning, not the least of which are the Five Shen or subdivisions of the soul, which inhabit man while he is alive and which will ultimately ascend to become a shining Ming after his death.

Above all, however, five represents the number of Life and of Preservation. In this sense it dominates or underlies all subsidiary meanings, and is in consonance with the Masonic use of that number. Masons are told that five are necessary to form a Lodge, while members of that fraternity will realise that the close connection of this number with Life and the Preserver are revealed by the five st . . s in the second degree, and also by the fact that the F.C.s who went in search were divided into three Lodges, each composed of five members.

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[a] See G. Schlegel, *The Hung, League,* p. xxiii.

Therefore the Lodge which found the Master consisted of the same number as the Founders of the Hung Society. In like manner a parallel clearly exists between the five who caught the villains and the Five Horse dealers of the Triad Traditional History.

NUMBERS 6 AND 7.

Six is of special interest to us because instead of seven liberal arts and sciences the Chinese speak of six, namely, Etiquette, Music, Archery, Writing, Drawing, and Charioteering. There were also six sacrificial animals—the horse, ox, sheep, pig, fowl, and, strange to say, the dog. They also enumerated six kinds of grain, and so highly esteemed was this number by the ancient Emperor Chi that he tried to set up a system of mathematics based upon it for use in land survey, weights and measures, and the like. In the Eight-Sided Diagram the symbol of Earth is represented by six broken lines, which thus form twelve, but despite that the number six does not play so important a part in Chinese symbolism as do certain other digits.

Seven is the number of completion and therefore of the end. Hence it symbolises the Destructive side of God and is the number of Death. Here again we find analogies with Freemasonry, for seven persons are needed to make a Lodge perfect, or complete, and the seven st...s in the third degree obviously refer to destruction. Among the Chinese there are in consequence seven ceremonies of mourning, and seven holes were cut in the bottom plank of a coffin in order to permit the juices of putrefaction to drain away. This plank is usually called the *Seven Starred Plank*, in allusion to the Great Bear, and it is possible that the Magic Sword of the Great bear, on which are engraved the seven stars contains a covert allusion to this *Seven Starred Plank* of the coffin. In view of the other evidence we have found that the candidate is symbolically dead and coffined such an allusion seems highly probable. The number seven, indeed, dominates all ceremonies and matters connected with mourning, and the Buddhist monks offer prayers for the dead man for seven successive days after his death. There are also said to be seven hells of punishment, and after three multiplied by seven, namely 21, days the corpse is buried. The Days of Mourning are seven multiplied by seven days, namely 49 days, and are usually called, *The Seven Weeks of Mourning*. Moreover, in other matters of importance the number seven appears when destruction is involved, and so it is not surprising to find that the reasons for divorce are also said to be seven.

In the Triad ritual A'Tsat, which means, Mr. Seven, was the nickname of the traitor monk who caused the *death* of the monks and the *destruction* of the abbey. It is likewise the name given to the cock which is slain when the candidate takes the oath. It is clear, moreover, that A'Tsat also represents our passions, which are likewise said to be seven; namely, joy, sorrow, love, hate, fear, anger, and concupiscence.

THE NUMBER 8.

Eight is made famous by the Pat Kwa, or Eight sided Diagram, but before dealing with this we will note certain other eights which play an important part in Chinese symbolism. It is the double of four, and hence closely associated with the material universe in its dualistic aspect. Therefore the Chinese divide their marine compass into eight parts, as do the Hindus. They also have eight points in their music and allow the highest State officials to have eight bearers to carry their litters. There are eight movements when bowing, for which there is a proper procedure, the fifth figure being known as the *Kau Tau*, or *Kneeling and knocking the head on the ground*, while the eighth, or deepest, sign of respect is the *San Kiu Kau*, or *Thrice kneeling and nine times knocking the head*.

It is, however, in the Eight sided Diagram that this number plays its most important role. The Pat Kwa is a common emblem among the Chinese and to it magical qualities are attached, for which reason it is often found embroidered on the robes of Priests, fastened up outside houses, and worn by children as a charm. In the centre are the emblems, Yang and Yin, representing spirit and matter, etc., and around this central motif is arranged an octagon divided into eight sections, each section containing three lines, so arranged that no two sections are the same. The basis of these lines are the Yang and Yin, the former being represented by a single continuous straight line and the latter by one broken into two sections. These two lines in various groups of three constitute the Pat Kwa, which also represents the eight points of the compass, each of which have a symbolical connection, and are named as follows:—

1. Kwan, North, corresponding to Peace and Mother Earth.
2. Chan, North East, which suggests motion and also the origin of knowledge.
3. Lei, the East, which signifies brightness and is connected with the tortoise.
4. Tui, South East. It denotes pleasure, the tongue and a concubine.
5. Kin, the South, corresponding with Strength and with a Father.
6. Sun, the South West. It means Penetration and also the eldest daughter.
7. Ham, the West, signifies danger and the Moon.
8. Kan, North West. It signifies Gates and anything perverse.

The above meanings play their part in various kinds of divination, but for all that the true cardinal points are by far the more important in China as they are in the West, and in the Hung ritual we find many references to them while the sub-cardinal points are omitted. The Pat Kwa is said to have been invented by the Emperor Fuh Hi, one of the five mystical Emperors, in B.C.

2850, and on it the Chinese script and their whole system of mathematics are supposed to be based. It also plays a very important part in geomantric observations for by means of it the geomancers claim that they can detect what are and what are not suitable sites for houses, temples, and, above all, graves.

That this emblem is greatly venerated by members of the Hung society is shown by the fact that the octagon often forms the dominating feature of their certificate [a] and sometimes it is combined with the fifteen puzzle, to which we shall refer later in this chapter. The eight sections represent, Heaven, Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Thunder, Moisture, and Hills, while the proportion of Yang and Yin in each is denoted by the proportion of intact or broken lines in each section. For example: Heaven is represented by three unbroken lines because it is the quintescence of Yang principle, while Earth is represented by three broken lines because it is the most complete embodiment of Yin. It is almost unnecessary to add that the Taoist Sages have evolved from this Pat Kwa numerous fanciful metaphysical arguments, which would, however, serve no useful purpose in this book.

NUMBERS 9 AND 10.

Nine being the square of three is naturally a most important symbol and is peculiarly associated with Heaven and spiritual things. A man must knock his head on the ground nine times when he worships Heaven, and in ancient times the land was divided into farms of nine squares. The family retained the produce of eight of these, remitting that of the ninth to the Emperor. The old Chinese character for nine meant *The Highest*, and so the ninth Heaven of the Buddhist is the highest Heaven of form. In the mundane world there were many nines; for example, nine grades, or professions, and the Imperial City, Pekin, has nine gates. Its mystical importance is shown by the reputed conversation supposed to have taken place between Confucius and the boy, Huing Foh, for when the Sage asked the lad what were the connecting bonds between Heaven and Earth, Huing Foh replied:—

"Nine multiplied by nine equals 81, which is the controlling bond of Heaven and Earth, while $8 \times 9 = 72$, the beginning and the end of the dual powers."[b]

In the Triad ritual multiples of nine constantly occur and some of them will be dealt with separately, but we may note in passing that all punishments with the Red Staff are multiples of nine strokes. Having now completed the single digits, we will briefly review some of the more complex numbers.

Ten seldom occurs in the Triad ritual, but when it does it clearly refers to the ten first principles of the Source of All, those aspects of the Supreme Being which are called the ten Prajapatis by the Hindus and the ten Sephiroth in the Kabala. We find the same idea underlying the *ten stems* of the Chinese [c] and

(a) See Vol. I., op. p. 34.
(b) G. Schlegel, *The Hung League*, p. xxviii.
(c) See Vol. I., p. 97.

note that they are linked with the Five Elements and the Five Cardinal Points. In the Hung ritual the number ten is used most significantly when speaking of the ten lost treasures, which obviously refer to these ten principles which lie hidden within each man. Among the Hindus they are Reason, Wisdom, Intelligence, Goodness, Majesty, Power, Creation, Preservation, Transmutation, and, lastly, Union; we shall probably not be far out if we apply this key to the use of ten in the Hung ceremonies.

THE NUMBER FIFTEEN.

Fifteen is the multiple of three and five and so combines the Creative and the Preservative aspects of the Deity, but it is also the sum total of 3+5+7, and so covers birth, life and death. Thus it embodies all the possible permutations through which the human soul can pass, and its allegorical meaning is deliberately stressed in the fifteen puzzle which often appears on Triad certificates,[a] more particularly in conjunction with the Pat Kwa, or at any rate with the Octagon. In it we shall recognise an old friend of our childhood's days, which is still used in India for magical purposes. It consists of a table of *nine* figures so arranged that no matter in which direction each line is added it will always total fifteen. Thus:—

4	9	2
3	5	7
8	1	6

It will also be noticed that the grand total of all the numbers is 45, or 3 × 15. In the Hung Society this symbol is not a mere mathematical curiosity but contains a definite esoteric meaning. The 15 represents the fifteen sub-souls which when united in the human body constitute Man. This puzzle is said to have been discovered on the back of a tortoise by the Emperor Yu, who lived B.C. 2205. This tortoise, with the puzzle marked on its back appears on a drawing of the lay out of a Hung Lodge now in my possession. It is a somewhat crude affair on cotton, not to be compared with the examples illustrated in volume I., but the presence of the tortoise is significant. The tortoise, of course, is one of the most long lived creatures in the world. Hence symbolically the fifteen puzzle on its back is a hint to the initiate that man's soul, which is compounded out of the Yang and Yin principles, is immensely old. It suggests that he has come from the Eternal, ages ago, and has passed through numerous incarnations and is not new-sprung from Heaven.

Before leaving this subject it should be added that although on the Certificate the numbers are indicated by their Chinese symbols, on the tortoise they are represented by groups of dots. Thus, the central figure, which is five, is represented in this manner :·: . As 5 is said to be the number of Shang Ti, *God*, or of Tien, *Heaven*, we perceive that there are further meanings hidden

(a) See Vol. I., op. p. 34.

within this puzzle, for the central position of the number five implies that God lies hidden at the centre of every man.

There is one other fifteen to which all reference cannot be omitted in a book of this nature. According to Buddhist theology there are five Buddhas, the fourth being Gautama and the fifth, Maitrêya, who is still to come. Each Buddha, however, is considered to be threefold in nature, thus making fifteen Buddhas in all. Of these the fourth Buddha is, during the present dispensation, the most important and his triad consists of the Supernal Buddha, Amitaba; the Pretemporal Buddha, Avalokitisvara (Kwan Yin); and Gautama, who is Buddha incarnate on earth. Thus, the fifteen Buddhas correspond with the fifteen subdivisions of man and we thereby obtain an oriental endorsement of the Western mystical saying, "As above, so below," or, in other words, man is a microcosm of the Universal Essence.

THE HIGHER SYMBOLICAL NUMBERS.

On investigation it will be found that most of the higher symbolical numbers in the Hung ritual are multiples of 3, but as some of these have a definitely esoteric meaning it is necessary to deal briefly with a few of them. *Twenty-one* is the multiple of 3, Creation, by 7, Destruction, and so implies Death, which creates a *New Life*. Hence 21 Heroes go on board the Hung Boat.

Thirty-six are the Heavenly Benign Spirits who preside over the world; These are the 36 Decans of the Zodiac, each section of ten degrees of the Zodiac being under the control of a presiding semi-divine spirit. These are all of the Yang principle and consequently the 36 Peaches represent the 36 benign Spirits.

Seventy-two are the Earthly malign spirits, or the Diamond Stars of Earth, who are charged with the rule and governance of the earth. They belong to the Yin principle, yet they are only evil in that they are of the Earth—earthy. Therefore the 72 Plums represent these Earth Spirits, and the total of 108 always refers to the union between these two orders of spiritual beings, who, when united, may be considered as representing all things, visible and invisible, in Heaven and earth. It may be in allusion to a similar idea among the Jews that their Senate, or Sanhedrin, consisted of 72 members.

This must conclude our section on the Chinese symbolism of numbers. Those who know something of similar systems in the West will recognise numerous points of similarity and also here and there certain differences of meaning. In any case this key is necessary if we are to obtain a clear interpretation of the meaning of the Hung ceremony.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MONASTIC INFLUENCE.

HILE there are clear traces of magical superstitions and Taoist beliefs in the Hung ceremony, it is also evident that Buddhism, and particularly Buddhist Monasticism, has not been without its influence. The heroes of the legend are Buddhist Monks, a fact which is not surprising when we remember that the organisation which Eon founded in 386 A.D. had as its basis eighteen persons, whose number was avowedly in imitation of the 18 Lohans of Buddha. It seems probable, indeed, that the ceremonies of the Hung Society are in part based on those which admitted a man to the Order of Monks, although those may themselves have been evolved out of earlier initiation rites.

For example, although the cutting of the hair is clearly magical, it may have been regarded as a symbol of the tonsure common to all Buddhist monks, and if so the scissors would be invested with a like significance. In Burma the monk usually shaves his head completely, but even there we find men who are content with a close crop such as can be obtained by the use of scissors. Moreover, the novice must first have his locks cut with a pair of scissors before the razor can be applied. In China the custom varies, but not all monks are close shaved, and so to the Buddhist members of the Order the scissors and the hair cutting ceremony may well have been intended as a reminder of the sacrifice of hair made by the monks. Were this incident to stand alone, however, we should hesitate to regard it as very significant, since the magical object of hair cutting is unquestionable, but there are other features in the ceremony which support the view that a distinct similitude to the preparation of a novice is intended.

THE ROBES.

The robes with which the candidate is clothed are said to be *Ming Robes*, which is usually interpreted as meaning that they are cut in the Ming fashion, but if we study the picture of a ceremony actually in progress[a] we shall perceive that they are not like the ordinary clothing of the Ming period, but rather resemble that worn by a monk. Moreover, the manner in which they are worn calls to mind the way in which the strictest schools of the Buddhists, such as those of Burma, drape their robes, and not the usual method in vogue in China.

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[a] See Vol. I., op. p. 14.

In Burma the monks wear loose robes so draped as to leave the right arm, breast and shoulder bare, and the same rule prevails in Siam. This is in imitation of the Founders of the Faith, for statues of Buddha and his disciples are always represented thus clothed. In China and Japan, however, the Buddha and his disciples have both shoulders covered, although the breast is bare. The frontispiece of Volume II shows how a Chinese Lohan is draped, which is the usual method adopted by monks in China.

In the original Chinese painting of the ceremony in progress[a] the various persons taking part are not in white, despite the fact that this colour is explicitedly laid down in all the rituals. The Master and most of the Officers wear red, while some of the candidates are in red and others in green or yellow. This apparent contradiction is very puzzling, and may be due to an error on the part of the artist, but this is not very likely. It seems more probable that the various coloured robes represent different Orders of monks and that they have been used, despite the rubric, to emphasise the fact that the candidates have symbolically become monks. It may be that in the particular Lodge which this picture represents the candidates were reclothed in white inside the Lodge when they entered the City of Willows, for one of the rubrics definitely states that this *may* be done at that point of the ceremony.[b] In the original painting one Officer who is by the altar dispensing water is clothed in white, which may be a hint that at this spot the candidate changes into white.

The colours of the robes are certainly significant, for yellow is that worn by monks in Burma and Siam, red is worn by the Lamas of Little Tibet, while blue, or green, is used by many sects in China and Japan. Hence the use of these three colours may be intended to convey the lesson that despite minor differences all monks belong to the same faith and join in harmony inside a Hung Lodge. Among those depicted in the picture two are not in monastic dress; one is clad like a high official, or Mandarin, and is seated near the right hand pillar as the candidates enter the first gate. The other is in ordinary civilian attire and is having tea offered to him, doubtless he is a visitor from another Lodge. Now the robes worn by the candidates and officers are said to be Ming robes, which literally means, robes of Light, and in Burma when a monk dies he is no longer spoken of by his earthly name but is called, *The Great Glory*, or *Light*, because he is supposed to have entered into Neikban. Hence the robes of a monk, and particularly those of a dead monk, may appropriately be called, *The Robes of Glory*, or *Light*. It is, moreover, a very usual custom in Buddhist countries at the death of a man to dress his body in the robes of a monk and to tonsure his head. I have a Japanese Memorial Print of a famous actor, which was issued at his funeral, and therein the dead man is shown, not in his clothes as an actor, but clad in the *blue robes* of a Japanese monk; his head is tonsured and he holds in his hands a rosary.

(a) See Vol. I. op. p. 14.
(b) *Ibid.*, p. 58.

THE INTERIOR OF A BUDDHIST MONASTERY AT PENANG.
(Showing the Nine-Storied Pagoda, etc.).

This custom was widespread in Mediæval Europe and many a hard-bitten baron who never thought of entering a monastery during his life was buried in Monastic weeds. Even today devout Roman Catholics are often buried in the robes of a pilgrim, implying symbolically that they have started on that pilgrimage whose goal is Heaven. That there is a special efficacy in the Monastic Regalia is shown by the superstition still current among the Carmelite monks, although no doubt it would receive no official support from the higher ecclesiastics. According to one of their traditions the Virgin Mary descends into Purgatory each Friday and rescues therefrom all who are wearing the white cord of a Carmelite, hence many devout persons tie the white cord of a Carmelite monk round the waist of their dead.[a]

SYMBOLIC DEATH AS A MONASTIC INITIATION.

With these facts before us we are justified in suspecting that certain Buddhist ceremonies are incorporated in the Hung ritual. Symbolically each candidate is dead and so his body is prepared by being clad in the robes of a monk, and his head symbolically tonsured. Thus protected, he is the better enabled to face the dangers of his allegorical journey through the Underworld. It is important to remember that in the West there are traces of Initiation Rites associated not only with the Christian Monastic Orders but with the ceremonies of the Church itself. To this day a novice seeking admission to the Benedictine Order has to pass through a dramatic representation of death and resurrection. At one point in the ceremony he is stretched out on the ground in front of the High Altar, covered with a black velvet pall, and four tall candles are lighted and set one at each corner of the silent figure. After thus lying in the darkness of the grave he is solemnly raised to Light and made a member of the Order.[b] Nor are secret signs lacking, for Matthew Paris definitely mentions them and adds, "Let us all endeavour to learn the necessary signs."[c]

Some Orders of Nuns also pass through a symbolical death and resurrection: they are clad in white and are laid in an actual coffin in front of the High Altar. This is when they become "professed," which is the third stage, or degree, through which those seeking admission must pass. It is significant that they also have to sacrifice their hair.

One such sign which is in use to this day in the Roman Catholic Church is of peculiar interest to us. At the ceremony known as *The Adoration of the Cross*, which takes place on Good Friday, the Priest, Deacon and Sub-Deacon (note, three persons) advance from the altar rails towards the Cross, which

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(a) For the above tradition I am indebted to the Rev. W. H. Wigram, D.D.

(b) R. F. Gould, History of Freemasonry, Vol. II., p. 228. (In some editions it is Vol. III., p. 228.)

(c) T. D. Fosbroke, *British Monachism* (1802), Vol. II., p. 5, citing Matthew Paris, 403, Also R. F. Gould, *Ibid.*, Vol. I., p. 22.

stands on the Altar. They advance three steps, pause and make the sign "K"[a] and bow. They advance two more steps, and do likewise; finally, they take another two steps, making seven in all, and repeat the bow and sign. The meaning of this action is that they are approaching nearer to the Light of the Cross, and so shield their eyes from its mystical radiance, while the right hand on the heart testifies to their faith in its Saving Grace. In like manner this sign used by a Hung brother refers to the Light (Ming) which burns in the heart of every true member. In the account given in Volume II[b] it should be remembered that it was in this attitude that the disciples approached Gautama Buddha when the hall was illuminated by a strange light, and so we may suspect that it is from the Buddhist Church that the Hung Society borrowed this sign, although the other possibility cannot be ignored, namely, that the Buddhist Church and the Hung Society both inherited it from an older Rite. If so its use by the Buddhist Church would strengthen its hold on the Hung brethren.

THE LOST PRECIOUS OBJECTS.

These are not, however, the only traces of Buddhist Monastic influence, for the Rosary is essentially an emblem of the monks,[c] and several of the lost Precious Objects, such as the Kan Yung Bell, the Incense Vase, and the Surplices worn by the monks can be traced to the same source. Perhaps, however, the Nine Storied Pagoda is the most striking example, seeing the important part it plays in the Traditional History. This symbolises the Nine Lower Heavens, each being represented by a story, and, as will be seen from the photograph of the altar of the Kek Loh Monastery, Penang,[d] it also appears on Monastic altars. The same picture shows the two red candles familiar to us in the Hung ritual, although these cannot be regarded as exclusively Buddhist.

Mention of this Monastery brings to mind the Temple of Kao Chai, in which the Five Founders took refuge. We are not specifically told that it was Buddhist, although this seems probable, but in any case the Temples of all three of the great Chinese religions are very similar, particularly the exteriors. The most interesting exterior features are the elaborate roofs and the twin pillars which usually appear in front of the door and help to support the roof of a kind of verandah, or porch. It is possible that in these two pillars we have the last trace of such phallic pillars as those which stood in front of the porch of the Temple of King Solomon. As, however, private houses are often found with similar pillars too much stress must not be laid on their survival.

In conclusion it may be said that Buddhist Monasticism has undoubtedly

(a) See Vol. I., op. p. 108.

(b) See Vol. II., p. 16.

(c) Vol. I., pp. 172-3.

(d) See illustration op. p. 84.

had its influence on the Hung ceremonies, and it may be that at one time the connection between the two was closer than it is to-day. The fact that women can be admitted to the Society in no way militates against this possibility, for there are Buddhist Nuns as well as Monks, and if some of the Hung ceremonies suggest that the Society may at one time have been a pendant, or even an inner working, of the Monastic Orders it would be most probable that the nuns would not be excluded. Indeed, as indicated in Chapter V, certain details in the ritual apply to the preparation of a woman's corpse, and not to that of a man, and this contradicts the assumption that the Order was originally restricted to monks or that it was purely political, since women not only play an insignificant part in Chinese politics but would be a distinct handicap as members of a revolutionary society. Finally, we cannot forget that the first definite historical reference we have to the Society is a statement that it was founded by the great Buddhist Monastic Patriarch, Eon.

A Burmese Monk
showing the
Arrangement of Robes.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHAT MYSTICISM IS.

IN view of the clear traces of Monastic influence which can thus be seen in the ritual, it is not surprising to find that the whole ceremony has a clearly defined mystical meaning, for, after all, one of the principal objects of monasticism is to develop the inner life of a man along mystical lines. This is true both of Buddhist monasticism and the similar institution in the West, for although the monks in the course of centuries undertook many tasks of practical utility, such as teaching children, feeding the poor and the like, they originally developed out of the hermits who withdrew from secular life in order to meditate upon spiritual matters and by asceticism and religious practices endeavour to achieve the beatific vision. In this connection it is significant that one of the few places in Europe where a Society of men still survives, who by means of certain religious exercises strive to achieve this end, is in the cluster of monasteries which are to be found on Mount Athos, near Salonica. Let us therefore turn to consider this aspect of the Hung ceremony.

In order to do so it behoves us to define clearly what is meant by that term. Mysticism has nothing to do with magic, neither does it mean something unintelligible, although often the term is misapplied in these ways. It stands for a definite religious conception which is found alike in Christian and non-Christian faiths. No school of religious thought is without its mystics; they are found in the orthodox Roman Catholic Church, a well known modern example being Mons. Benson, while Bunyan, the Puritan pedlar of the 17th century, was just as truly a mystic. The Hindu, the Chinese Buddhist and the Mahommedan Fakir may all claim to be mystics, and to this school of thought belongs the ancient Greek philosopher, Plotinus.

The distinguishing characteristic of the mystic is that he believes that he can himself, by prayer and meditation, achieve even in this life, spiritual Union with God. He considers that within himself is a Spark of the Divine, which, because it *is* Divine will enable him to achieve At-one-ment, and he therefore strives to cultivate and develop this Divine Spark within him. He may, or may not, conform to the external religious customs and doctrines of some definite creed, but his object is to acquire *knowledge* of the Divine by visions, which to him are real experiences, instead of depending on faith and so accepting blindly the teaching of others.

Mysticism, stripped of all verbage, is the vital force behind every religion

—that which makes it personal. It is the striving of the spirit to replace faith drawn from the teaching of others, by knowledge, achieved by the spirit and communicated thence to the soul by each man within himself. The object of all true mystics is to achieve a vision—an experience of the nature of God—within his own heart. This vision in the West is called, *The Beatific Vision of Mount Athos*, because the monks there still practice certain spiritual exercises which they believe will produce it.

The vision is a sudden realisation of God about us, and within us, a new found knowledge of His Nature which can never be described in words to others, but which Professor James, the great American psychologist, boldly testifies is to those who have achieved it as real as any experience in mundane life. Careful students of the subject recognise certain well defined stages in the spiritual evolution of the mystic, and, if Christian, they love, in all reverence, to correlate them with certain external events in our Lord's life.

THE MYSTIC QUEST.

Now all the Mystery Rites, including Freemasonry,[a] teach in allegory this journey of the mystic, which is often called *The Mystic Quest*, and although the various rites are coloured by the prevalent exoteric religious beliefs of the majority of the members, yet the basis is always the same. Hence anyone who knows thoroughly the mystical meaning of his own Rite cannot fail to recognise the general trend of another. The first factor is a sense of something lost, a feeling of separation from our true home. This means that the Divine Spark within us feels its separation from the Divine Light, of which it is truly a spark, but from which a material body and mundane conditions seem to cut it off. Often, therefore, the mystic allegory starts with a picture of life in a place of tranquil peace, far from the bustle, toil and sorrow of the world, and describes how the hero of the story is thrust out from this happy abode and compelled to wander amid darkness and perils, seeking the way back to his long lost home. Often he cannot return thither until he has recovered something which he has lost, and possession of which is essential to his readmission.

The legends of the Holy Graal deal very fully with this motif but to the mystic the Bible itself contains many such allegories, which are none the less allegories because some of them appear to be historic incidents. To such men the Fall and expulsion from the Garden of Eden symbolise the Descent of the soul into Matter, its departure from the presence of God so that it may enter flesh and thereby gain experience—Knowledge of Good and Evil—in order that it may learn to love the good and hate the evil. Reverting to the Graal Legend, this stage is represented in the *High History* by the statement that Sir Perceval lived in the Graal Castle but was compelled to leave it and wander through the world because he failed to ask a question when he saw the Graal, and hence came all the evil which subsequently befell.

(a) See Ward, *An Explanation of the Royal Arch Degree*, published by The Baskerville Press, Ltd.

Taking the Bible story and starting with the expulsion from Eden as representing the descent of the Divine Spark into Matter, we shall, from the Mystic standpoint, immediately link this incident with the promise of a coming Redeemer. The intervening ages which elapse, wherein the Chosen People suffer many vicissitudes, represent the early years of the mystic's life, wherein he learns the bitter truth that earthly triumphs are soon followed by defeats, and earthly joys are but vanity. The crucial point in the story is the appearance of the Christ, whose life henceforth is itself a parable of the awakening of the Christ Spirit in every man and the mystical return to God.

EARLY STAGES THROUGH WHICH THE MYSTIC PASSES.

The stages through which the mystic passes in this journey are many, but some stand out more clearly than others. There is the *Conversion*, that is, the turning round, and inward, of the thoughts: the desire for union first becomes articulate, and this leads the man to turn from mundane affairs, perhaps even from the external forms of religion, to contemplate his own spiritual nature and try to co-ordinate it with what he already knows concerning God. This corresponds with the Baptism of Christ.

In his early years the mystic, like other men, usually conforms to the established faith of his own country, performs its ceremonies, and attends its services because he has been taught to do so in his youth. There comes a day, however, when he feels a vague stirring within him, a sense of dissatisfaction with the mere lip service which until now he has rendered, and a dim, but real sensation of wanting something, although as yet he knows not what. Very often this *awakening* is due to some incident which shows him the misery and sin in which a large portion of the human race live. This *cause* is well brought out in the early history of Gautama Buddha, who first turned to deeper things when he saw a miserable old beggar, and later a corpse. In the phraseology of the Christian story, he is born of a pure Virgin, begotten of the Holy Ghost, which mystically implies that the Christ Spirit which is thus born in him is begotten by the Supreme Source of All, is linked with the Divine Spark within him, and his soul is reborn to higher things. For some time, like Christ, he is a mere child, seeking and learning the true meaning of the religious system in which he has until then lived, and in the course of study and meditation he receives flashes of intuition which enable him to *"expound the Scriptures."* This means to comprehend the inner meaning of the official teaching in a way which astonishes and sometimes perturbs his seniors. This stage corresponds with that of Christ disputing with the Elders in the Temple when only twelve years old, and during this period those in authority are inclined to be gratified at the earnestness of the mystic and even encourage him in his search.

After a time, however, he begins to feel dissatisfied with the official attitude of those in control of his religion. He feels that they are *blind leaders of the blind*, and that some, at any rate, care more about their own official status, and the power of the organisation to which they belong, than about the deep spiritual truths which their religion enshrines. He becomes discontented with the simple faith which he learnt at his mother's knee, largely because he perceives that its adherents, while doing lip service to it, make little attempt to carry it out in their own lives. In this position of doubt and difficulty he tends to withdraw from active intercourse with his former associates and spends long periods thinking, pondering and meditating on the problems which puzzle him. This period corresponds to the forty days' fast in the desert. During it he is tempted at times to throw up the Quest, to be satisfied with the official religion and have done with the spirit of vague unrest which, while it disturbs his former peace of mind, seems unable to bring him any answer to the problems it has raised. He feels also that he must deny himself many little pleasures which heretofore he had enjoyed, and at times the *flesh* seems to say, "Why waste your time on idle speculations, why deny yourself reasonable amusement? I do not advocate an evil life, far from it, but there is no sense in cutting yourself off from your old friends and abandoning your harmless amusements, just to speculate on abstruse problems." This is the temptation to turn the stones into bread, that is to say, to make the idle pleasures of the moment the main aim of life.

If he overcomes this temptation another arises, his friends warn him that he is alienating the rich and powerful; that he is missing golden opportunities of advancing his worldly fortunes; that *practical men of the world* have no use for dreamers, and in consequence he is wasting his real abilities on idle speculations, instead of using them to acquire worldly position which, once achieved, will enable him to be of *real use to mankind*. This temptation is, therefore, more subtle than the first, for it is held out in the specious guise of enabling him to do good to others. Its cleverness lies in the fact that once completely immersed in the struggle for power and influence his capacity for doing real spiritual good would largely be destroyed. It corresponds, in short, with the second temptation, *"all the Kingdoms of this Earth will I give Thee."*

The final temptation is even *more* subtle. An opportunity occurs whereby he can achieve a position of power and influence, not in mundane things, but in the religious system to which he belongs. It varies in every case; sometimes it is to be a sensation monger and do something which will attract the attention of the unthinking crowd; at other times it is a definite offer of high ecclesiastical office, using the term in its widest sense. Should he fall before this temptation his own spiritual development will inevitably cease and he will become *as the Pharisees*. This is the third temptation, *"Cast Thyself down from hence."*

If, however, the true seeker surmounts these temptations he obtains his

first definite spiritual reward in the form of a vision, or sudden inspiration, which transforms his vague seeking into a definite Quest. He is still a long way from his goal, but he has glimpsed at last the inner meaning of things and feels that henceforward he has a definite mission to perform—to lead others along the same path as he is following. This state corresponds to the phrase, "*Angels came and ministered unto Him*," and is followed by the descent of the Holy Ghost, as at the Baptism.

THE MYSTIC AS A TEACHER.

At this point we usually find that some old and wise friend comes into the life of the aspiring mystic, one more experienced than he is, but whose work is nearly done. Such a man sometimes has a profound influence on his future life, for his line of work is often indicated by this friend. The sound advice and ripe experience of such a man is of invaluable assistance to the younger mystic who, though he may subsequently pass his friend in the Mystic Quest, always feels that he owes to him more than he does to anyone else in the world. Such a friend corresponds to St. John the Baptist, and it is remarkable how often the great Mystic takes up some half worked out theme of the older man and at a later period carries it through to completion.

The next period is one of active participation in the world of spiritual life around him. He becomes a recognised leader of thought with a band of enthusiastic helpers. At first all goes well, the outside world discusses him and his views, some people are inclined to agree with him, while others, the more reactionary and hide-bound, criticise him adversely and sneer at his sayings. He is not, however, without champions, some of whom do more harm than good by their excessive zeal and lack of comprehension of his deeper meaning. This stage corresponds with the earlier part of Christ's mission.

As time goes on the orthodox and official type of religious people harden in their opposition. In the early days they did not trouble about him, but as his apparent influence increases they grow jealous of his popularity and begin to fear that he will undermine their influence and their control of the religious system. Unfortunately this opposition often includes not only the worldly, but also genuinely good and honest men, who regard him as a dangerous dreamer who may divert the ecclesiastical organisation from practical objects into untrodden, and therefore dangerous, paths. His enemies become more bitter and more ruthless, until there comes a time when they are prepared to go to any length to smash him, and are merely waiting for the opportunity. This period corresponds with the closing months of Christ's ministry, when the opposition of the Pharisees became more marked.

THE BETRAYAL.

The mystic's downfall is usually preceded by some apparent triumph, which not only provokes his opponents to desperate action, but in itself gives

them something which can be twisted so as to sway the fickle mob. Then follows the Garden of Gethsemane. A phase through which every true mystic *must* pass. He is deserted and betrayed by the very people whom he most trusted.[1] This phase is bitter indeed, by some it is called the *Valley of the Shadow of Death*, and the cup must be drunk to the last dreg. Betrayal follows betrayal, treachery and malice are everywhere, and for the most part the agony must be borne alone. Even the few loyal friends who do remain seem unable, or unwilling, to come to him, yet for all that no man is a true Mystic who has not experienced this heart-rending stage and followed it by the still more awful agony of Calvary.

Bitter as was Gethsemane, still more bitter is the stage which follows. It is not the condemnation of the official party, his avowed enemies, which wounds the Mystic, it is something still more terrible which is taking place within his own soul. He has learnt by bitter experience that he cannot trust his friends, and he now begins to doubt himself. Has he after all made a huge and tragic mistake, and if he has what of the Divine Spark, the faint, small voice which has led him? And so he reaches the abyss itself; he doubts even God. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" There is no more terrible cry of anguish than that which rang from the Cross on Good Friday, and yet the same cry is sooner or later uttered by every man who follows to the end the Mystic Quest. But that cry is itself the key which unlocks the door of the great Mystery he has been seeking and, strange to say, those few loyal friends who seemed unable to help him when he wanted their sympathy in the Garden of Gethsemane are there on Calvary, although still they cannot comfort him. It is not because they are unwilling to do so, or afraid to stand by his side, their fear and sloth are over, but he himself has passed beyond the aid of human comfort, and though they try to give it he is incapable of receiving it.

THE MYSTIC DEATH AND RESURRECTION.

After Calvary, the bitter darkness of despair, comes the Tomb. He has been deserted by all whom he trusted, his life's work has come to nought, even the Divine Light has been withdrawn and he is in utter darkness. Yet amid his own misery he finds others bowed down with sorrow and anguish, and out of the fulness of his own misery he is able to sympathise with these and comfort them. He Harrows Hell, and brings forth those who were in bondage, and in so doing he finds again the Light.

This light comes to him suddenly, and as the dawn of something still more splendid. He realises his own Divine nature, linked with that of God. With this new and amazing discovery—a realisation of his essential union with the Divine—he feels himself reinvigorated and rises, as it were, from the dead.

[1] This betrayal is real and in no sense symbolical. It is remarkable how invariably those who have most loudly proclaimed their unswerving loyalty not only desert the mystic but join with enemies to crush him. It is this betrayal, and not the triumph of his avowed enemies, which cuts the mystic to the soul.

This is the mystical resurrection. Henceforth he no longer *believes*, but he *knows*, and with that knowledge he goes back once more to help others to achieve the same stupendous miracle. It may be that the Mystic thereafter becomes the founder of a definite school of mystical thought, if so this corresponds to the forty days on earth which Christ passed before His ascension.

THE END OF THE JOURNEY.

The Ascension of our Lord, to the Mystic, conveys in allegory that experience which he usually calls *The Beatific Vision*. It is an experience beyond words, and can only be described as a realisation of complete union, or at-one-ment, with God. It is the goal of all his strivings, the crown given only to the victor, and its name is, *Peace*. In all ages and in all religions we find references to this Beatific Vision. Henceforth the Mystic Quest is ended, and whether or not he leaves this earthly life immediately is of little consequence. He knows now the hollowness and emptiness alike of earthly joys and sufferings, and comprehends the splendour and the glory of God, with Whom he is made one. That this experience is real, objectively as well as subjectively, is attested by such eminent psychologists as Professor James, and to those who have once experienced it the Beatific Vision of Mount Athos is the one reality in a world of shifting illusions.

It is this which Dante describes in the *Beatific Rose*; this of which we obtain a glimpse in the *Degree of the Sun* in the Mithraic Rites. Tennyson describes it, and to this day the Monks of Mount Athos try to obtain it in the Mountains above Salonica. It is this theme, which like a golden thread runs through every degree in Masonry, although few there be who perceive it, and in like manner it can be traced throughout the ceremonies of the Triad Society, while the same is true of every important Mystery Rite from the days of ancient Babylon and Egypt up to the present time.

We must realise, however, that although, when looking back, the mystic can detect most, if not all, of the stages through which he has passed, during the course of his journey he may confound one stage with another. Often when he has reached the Garden of Gethsemane he thinks that he has already reached Calvary, and the glory of the Resurrection of his Soul may for a time seem to him a glimpse of the Vision Splendid.

With this key in our hands let us now apply it to the ceremonies of the Hung Society, recollecting that to us the allegory employed is foreign, and that in the life of every Mystic there are subtle differences so that, although he passes in the main through the same experiences as others there are minor differences, some of which may to him seem of such importance as to need illustrating in *his* allegory.

From what has been written above it will be evident that the Mysteries are the dramatic representation by allegory and symbol of that greatest of all mysteries—the Real Initiation—the Quest of the Soul after Union with God.

THE THREE CHILDREN IN THE FURNACE.
(A Coptic Fresco from Wadi Sarga).

CHAPTER XV.

A MYSTICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE HUNG CEREMONY.

PECULIARITIES OF ORIENTAL MYSTICISM.

ALTHOUGH the fundamentals of Mysticism are the same in both Europe and Asia, yet Oriental Mysticism is generally influenced by certain beliefs not so widespread or common in Europe, and therefore apparently strange to many Europeans. Of these the two most important are a somewhat Pantheistic conception of the Supreme Being, and the Doctrine of Reincarnation. Without attempting to go into the exact differences in the conception of the Supreme Being held by an Englishman and a Hindu, or Chinese, it is sufficient to say that the Eastern conception is rather more impersonal than the Western, and may roughly be summarised in the sentence, "All things are part of God and therefore God is part of all things." A Western Mystic would probably express the same idea in some such sentence as follows—"All things are created by God, but the Creator is greater than that which He has created, and can therefore hardly be described as part of it." These may be regarded as extreme views on both sides, but they will serve to indicate a distinct difference which will also be noticed by a Western student of the Hung ritual.

The doctrine of reincarnation, so widespread in the East, naturally profoundly alters the mystical outlook, although it does not change the fundamental basis. The difference created is rather one of time, for whereas the Western Mystic must aim at achieving his Quest in the short space of one life the Oriental can take a wider view, since he believes that he has had many lives and may yet have others on this mortal earth wherein he can follow the Mystic Quest until it ends in his ultimate release from the Wheel of Fate. Thus any particular life may represent but one stage in the Mystical journey, whereas the Western Mystic must crowd into a brief span of years all the stages. In practice, however, there is not so much difference between the Eastern and the Western Mystic as might be expected, since every true follower of the Quest is anxious to press forward to his goal as quickly as possible.

That reincarnation plays an important part in the Hung ritual is evidenced by the answer given by the Vanguard in the note on page 53 of Volume I, which we will here give in full.

Master— The Five Ancestors are above us, but who is prostrate before me?

Vanguard— I am, Tien Yu Hung of the Ko Chai Temple.

Master— Nonsense, there is no *person* named Tien. Where were you born?

Vanguard— I was once a eunuch in the palace of His Majesty Tsing Cheng, and because of my loyalty and patriotism I was allowed back in life to search for heroes to avenge injuries; to restore the Mings to their country and to avenge the burning of the Shaolin Monastery. I worship Heaven as father, Earth as Mother, the Sun as brother, and the Moon as sister-in-law. Heaven gave birth to sun and moon (Ming) to rule by Hung (Hung Wu?), therefore I call myself Tien Yu Hung—*Heaven protect Hung*.

Now the above passage is interesting for two reasons. The statement that he worships the Sun as his brother etc., might be regarded as pure Pantheism, but we must not forget than St. Francis d'Assissi speaks in very similar language of Sun, Moon, Beasts and Flowers, and no one has accused him of Pantheism. But it is not this phrase which mainly interests us, it is the statement that the Vanguard, who originally lived long years ago, is allowed back in life, i.e. reincarnated, in order to search for Heroes. Now, there *is* a legend current in popular Chinese lore of such a eunuch who, when his master, defeated by his enemies, committed suicide, himself tried to do likewise, by hanging himself from the legs of the Emperor who was swinging from a tree. Unfortunately when he was found he was suspected of having caused the death of his Master, was branded as a traitor and executed. So gross was the injustice thus meted out to this loyal servant that the Lord of the Underworld permitted him to return to life—rising from the dead—and thus he was given an opportunity to contradict the false charge and rehabilitate his reputation. Now this story refers, not to reincarnation, but to the actual physical resurrection of a dead man, and we cannot doubt that the linking of the Vanguard with this story is deliberate. Who more suitable to lead the souls through the Underworld to the City of the Gods than one who has Risen from the Dead, thereby triumphing over the King of Enemies? In short, the Vanguard is at least a shadow of the Salvator, and it is certainly interesting that it is a man, and not someone representing Kwan Yin, who thus leads the candidate through the Valley of the Shadow.

Having disposed of these preliminary points, and bearing in mind the fact that the mystical journey of the soul as sketched in the Hung ritual pre-

supposes not one life but many, let us turn to a careful correlation of the points in the ceremony with the framework of the Mystic's journey which we studied in the last Chapter. We must also remember the terrible significance under such circumstances of the penalties attached to some of the Thirty-six Oaths, such as that given on page 169 of Volume I, "May he never return to this world again!" This means may he never be reincarnated, and since by the breach of this clause of his obligation he has failed in the Journey during this life the result of this penalty would be that he would never have another chance to complete his Quest at all.

THE MYSTICAL MEANING OF THE TRADITIONAL HISTORY.

THE opening section of the Traditional History depicts the monks living a happy and peaceful life amid the mountains, far from the turmoil of the material world; it therefore symbolises Eden in Western Mysticism, the time when the soul is still with God and has not yet descended into Matter. The monks are moved by the distress of their country, and thus we obtain a slightly different reason for the descent of the soul into Matter than that given in Genesis. In the latter the soul is actuated by curiosity and the Descent is depicted as a fall from grace, a sin against the command of the Most High, whereas in the Triad legend the soul responds to a noble impulse, the desire to help others, and hence we are reminded of the reasons which actuated the Christ and caused Him to descend and become incarnate. The monks therefore depart from their Eden and descend into the turmoil of mortal existence. They are received with open arms by the Lord of this World, represented by the Emperor, and successfully achieve their object by defeating the obvious Powers of Evil, here symbolised by the Eleuths. They return in triumph, are greeted with applause by the populace whom they have saved and honoured by the Rulers of this world. This stage corresponds with the early triumph of every mystical Teacher.

Now comes the first Temptation. They are wise enough to reject the more obvious temptations of the world and the flesh, as was the invitation of the Emperor to accept office at his Court, but they fell before the more subtle one, for though the Abbot refused personal aggrandisement he could not resist the temptation to acquire for his Abbey the Imperial Seal. This would correspond with the temptation of a Mystic to accept high Ecclesiastical Office.

The next stage is only too self-evident for it represents the Betrayal. The honour the Abbot accepted was his undoing, for the brutal murder was directly traceable to the jealousy of the State Official of the privilege which he had acquired for his Abbey. It is significant that there are three traitors, just as there are in a well known Western Rite, and we may in all reverence compare them with three of the principal characters in the Christian tragedy. A'Tsat corresponds with Judas Iscariot; the Prefect with the Jewish High

Priest, and the Emperor with Pontius Pilate. Mystically the Traitor Monk represents the flesh, as is clearly shown by the crimes of which he was guilty. He thus stands for all those opponents of the Mystic who hate him because he has opposed their evil lives. The Prefect is not quite so easy to place, but he corresponds most closely to the world, and hence to all those worldly people, gross materialists, who though not actually evil livers in the ordinary sense of the word, are yet opposed to the Mystic, whom they consider a dangerous dreamer. The Emperor corresponds in some measure to the Devil, symbolising more especially spiritual pride, particularly that of established authorities, whether in Church or State, who are opposed to the Mystic as a dangerous reformer who may oust them from their control of the spiritual machinery of the State; for the Emperor feared a rebellion.

The slaughter of the monks corresponds to Calvary, and needs no elaborate elucidation. The appeal to Buddha, however, shows that in the hour of deepest distress the Mystic is not left without help from on high. The flight amid the burning Abbey and down the Causeway marks the commencement of the Journey through the Underworld, and since this is given more fully in the catechism of the Vanguard we will not devote much space to it here, but rather indicate that this portion of the story deals mainly with Cosmic principles, rather than with individuals, whereas in the catechism of the Vanguard we are concerned with the symbolic and typical Mystic. The difference is shown in the termination, for the Five Monks never reached the Holy City in the Traditional History, instead we find an allegory of the apparent failure of virtue and the triumph of vice. The rebellion is a failure and the chosen leader is slain, but for all that the Order itself is not obliterated, it falls to rise again, and we thus get a mystical allegory of the never ending struggle between right and wrong. Whether Wan Yun Lung existed as a historical person or not is immaterial, but we cannot help suspecting that the second half of the ceremony symbolises his journey through the Underworld, and thus the symbolism changes from Cosmic to Individual. This fact is clearly marked in the ritual, for between the Traditional History and the catechism of the Vanguard on behalf of the candidate lies the whole of the ritualistic portion of the ceremony. It is as if we picked up the Mystical allegory from the point where in the Traditional History the Causeway appears amidst the flames of the Abbey, but it must not be forgotten that at a very much earlier stage in the ceremony, and within a few minutes of the time when the Master had finished his Traditional History, the Vanguard enters alone and is catechised by himself and on his own behalf.

Moreover, if we compare what the Vanguard says on his own behalf and what he subsequently says on behalf of the candidates we shall notice a subtle difference. He appears to know more than the candidates are supposed to know, for there are a number of questions that he answers which are not put to him on the second occasion. All the questions preceding "Whence come

you?" which appear on pages 53 and 54 in Volume I, are personal to the Vanguard and are not repeated. From them we learn several important facts, but two are outstanding. Firstly, that he has lived before and now brings with him myriads of troops, which implies that, like Sir Perceval in the *High History*, he has been the journey on some previous occasion and has returned to help others. The second factor is revealed in the following questions and answers:—

Master— There is a greater and a lesser Society of Heaven and Earth. Did you know this fact?

Vanguard— I know it: the Lesser Society began at the Waters of San-ho but the greater is contained in the principles of Heaven.

Master— Can you prove this?

Vanguard— I can prove it by a verse.

Master— Give me the verse.

Vanguard— The Lesser Society originated at San-ho
Where many brethren swore an oath of blood brotherhood.
But on the day that the principles of Heaven are perfected in man,
We shall at length be able to sing songs of Universal Peace.

The last two lines refer to the Cosmic Quest and contain a prophecy of the Millenium. The significance of this difference is that while each candidate is, as it were, interested in his own Salvation, the Vanguard symbolises someone greater, who will never be content until the whole universe has been "Saved," and the great Cosmic scheme of spiritual evolution brought to a successful and triumphant end.

THE SHIU LAM MONASTERY.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MYSTICAL MEANING OF THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE UNDERWORLD.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THREE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS.

ROM the foregoing we have learnt that the Vanguard symbolises in some measure the Second Person of the Trinity; Viraji, the Word, of the Hindu, and the Salvator aspect of the Godhead. If this be so we may naturally expect to find the other two aspects of the triune nature of God represented among the chief officers, the more so when we remember the marked stress laid on the triangle in the Hung Society. Indeed, there can be little doubt that the Master represents the Creative, or Father, side of the Godhead. It is he who creates the Lodge by his Consecration, and he who plays the most important part of all the Officers. He is the judge and the challenger who questions the candidate and later the Vanguard, namely, when he enquires concerning the journey. It will be noticed, however, that it is not he, but the Vanguard, who offers the great Prayer which starts on page 61 of volume I, and while the Master administers the Thirty-six Oaths and the Oath of Blood Brotherhood, when he and the two candidates are cleansing their mouths the Instructor, or White Fan, who until then has been passive, suddenly takes over the ceremony,[a] and thereafter has entire charge of the candidate until practically the end, when the Master again assumes control as he presents the certificate. It is therefore important to see what the Instructor does. It is he who actually pricks the finger of the candidate; it is he who administers the cup of wine and blood; he also explains the ten most important possessionsof the Hung Society, such as the Precious Sword, the Scales and the Mirror. Finally, it is he who gives the candidate the word, which is "Poon," signifying *Self*, and the general pass sign or five finger sign of the Order. These facts show that he represents a third aspect of the Triad, and one which more closely approximates to the Western conception of the Holy Ghost than to the Hinduconception of the Destroyer. This side is emphasised by his emblem, fan and also his title, namely, White Fan. White is the colour of spirit and the in all Rites, in East and West alike, symbolises the element, air, breath and hence Spirit. This, combined with the fact that he gives the Pass word, "Self," suggests the Holy Spirit, or Divine Spark within every man, which is clearly linked with the Holy Ghost. Having made these points clear, let us turn to the Mystical Journey which the candidate is supposed to take.

(a) See Vol. I., p. 72.

THE MYSTICAL JOURNEY.

The opening lines of the Vanguard's answers summarise briefly the personal adventures of the soul and in a sense overlap the Cosmic adventures of all souls, as depicted in the Traditional History. Therefore the soul comes from the East, the place of Light, and descends into matter. Its early experiences are in the Red Flower Pavilion, representing the maternal womb, as we know from other points in the ritual, to which reference has already been made. We are told on page 77 of Volume I "that it was here that the Master of Hung instructed me," which clearly refers to his youthful instruction in the orthodox religion of the country. This is made abundantly clear by the fact that the chapters numbered 108, which is the combined number of the Celestial and Terrestrial Powers, and implies that the simple lessons taught at his mother's knee contained the germs of all knowledge and moral instruction necessary for his salvation. That they were elementary lessons is shown by the statement that "the Master taught me the three bonds and the five virtues", that is to say, those fundamental principles of right conduct on which civilised communities rest. That it was the traditional knowledge that is imparted to him was implied by the fact that the chapter which he particularly studied was that of Wan-chang, one of the books of Mencius, the ancient Chinese philosopher. We may therefore say that the candidate shows that he has learnt the principles of moral truth and justice, and has made himself acquainted with the liberal arts and sciences. Further he is shown that these lead even to the throne of God Himself by the reference to the five sections, which we are told deal with "the principle of Heaven, the principle of Earth, the principle of the Gods, the principle of Man and the principle of Oneself." The candidate has also learnt that "the three principles are established together and one principle is common to all three." Thus Heaven, Earth and Man, although a triad, are also one and indivisible, made one by the principle of Light.

The next series of questions take us to the Shiu Lam Monastery, thereby implying that the adventures of the monks are symbolical of the journey of every man, and this period may be regarded as that of middle life, when the man has to play his part in the world of action. But now we leave all trace of the early life and start on the Mystic Quest itself. We learn that man is triune in nature or, as we should say in the West, body, soul and spirit. It is not necessary to follow in absolute detail all the adventures on this journey, but desirable to point out that the traveller can go by three roads, reminding us of the three roads, or paths, of the Mystic Quest as described in the West, namely the paths of Mercy, Severity, and the Middle Path of Benignity, by which latter the Hung Heroes travel. They may also be regarded as symbolising three methods of approaching the Supreme Being; that of Severity would represent the stern path of the ascetic, which has been so completely worked out by the Hindu Mystics. Hindu mysticism has always been characterised by

what to the Western mind often appears to be a somewhat selfish attitude. The Hindu Yogi aims at acquiring power by meditation and austerities in order to save himself, and at times seems strangely lacking in sympathy for his weaker brethren. In contradistinction to this path of approach there has always existed, in East and West alike, the type of man who considers that Salvation can be achieved by charity, using that word in its widest sense. His aim is not meditation and austerity, but to do as much good as he can to his fellow mortals, and he is apt to regard the development of his own spiritual faculties as being quite unimportant. Between these, however, there obviously lies a middle path, and it was this that Gautama Buddha enunciated. He rejected entirely the extreme asceticism of the Hindu Yogi, but he did not consider that Salvation by good works was the only, or necessarily the best, method of obtaining peace. While he laid great stress on the necessity for loving kindness and for helping those less advanced than the mystic, he nevertheless stressed the fact that the mystic must strive to develop his own spiritual faculties, and to him this was the Middle Path.

In the 4th century in China, however, there developed a craving for a personal Saviour, which may have been due to the influence of Nestorian Christians. The result was the rise of a School of Buddhist Thought which laid great stress on Salvation by Faith, and this marks a distinctly different attitude either from the older Buddhism or from the original paths of Severity and Mercy. The difference lies in the fact that the aspirant does not depend solely on himself to achieve the end of his journey, but looks for a downpouring of Grace, Inspiration, Comfort and Help, from One far more exalted than himself, namely Amitabha Buddha. There is little doubt that it is this doctrine which in the main is represented by the Middle Path of the Hung ritual.

This interpretation is supported in the ritual by the following question and answer:—

Master— Why by the Middle Road?

Vanguard— Because it was the broadest.

Now it is obvious that far more men could hope to attain Salvation through faith than by a course of severe asceticism or by an attempt to love all mankind, more particularly if they believed that power and enlightenment would be continually poured down upon those following that path by One more exalted than themselves. Before leaving this section it is worth while drawing attention to the question and answer which follow immediately after the last quotation:—

Master— What did you see on the road?

Vanguard— I saw a white heron flying overhead.

A white heron undoubtedly represents the white stork which, according to the

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(An Interesting European Example of the Use of a Hung Sign).

Taoists, carried the messages of the Gods, and so the white heron symbolises divine messages sent to the aspiring soul to assist him on his journey. Moreover, in the next answer—

Master— Did you pass anyone?

Vanguard— Yes, eight priests.

the traveller has ritualistic evidence that he is indeed on the right path, which has been trodden before him by great and holy men of the past, the path which has led them to immortality, for these are the eight Immortals.

The next set of questions and answers, concerning the meeting with the Red Youth, which are given by Stanton but which are not found in the Singapore rituals, seem to represent those incidents in Christ's life denominated the *Temptation in the Wilderness*, while the meeting with the woman who entered the grove of firs and cypresses clearly symbolises the Mystical Death. The tragedy of the mystical death is not laboured, it is passed over as if it were such a commonplace as not to require much explanation, and instead the ritual moves swiftly to the passage through the Underworld, which is marked by the appearance of the Hung boat. The first point which strikes us about this is the great emphasis laid on the fact that the candidate does not travel alone, there are others greater than he to guide him on his way. Firstly, we are introduced to the Captain and his wife, while we are told there are three people on the ship, but soon after we are told of many others, and the paradox is therefore somewhat puzzling. There are two possible explanations, either the third person is that mysterious character, *The Son of the Lord*, or else it is the candidate himself. Mystically, however, both may be the same, the former standing for the perfected man, or, as we should say in the West, the Christ, while the latter is a man striving for perfection and having the Christ Spirit within him. In either case this third person is placed between the Captain and his wife, for on the one hand we are told that the Hung Heroes are in the hold of the ship and on the other that while there are five holds, in the third was the Son of the Lord.

The birth hours of the Captain and his wife supply the missing key. The former was born at mid-night, the same hour as Christ was born, and in that most mystical of all the Gospels, *St. John*, the writer, says of Christ, "The Light shineth in the darkness." Here then we have an allegory of the descent of the Divine Spark into the darkness of matter, and so mystically the Captain stands for the Spirit. Moreover, it is the Captain who stands at the bow of the ship, implying that it is the Divine Spark within us which ever, like a beacon light, beckons us on towards the end of our journey.

The Captain's wife, being feminine, stands for the passive, and hence for the material world, and naturally therefore for the Body. Here again we shall remember that just as she was born at Mid-day so it was at that hour that

Christ was hung upon the Cross; it was likewise at that hour that the great Masonic hero was slain. Since it is the body only which can perish, these facts support the view that the woman symbolises the Body. In like manner she stands at the stern of the ship, implying that she must follow her lord and Master, the Spirit, but it must not be forgotten that she is near the steering oar, and is in a position to divert the course of the ship if she is disobedient to the Captain, who, though he may see the path along which the ship should travel, may be defeated by the insubordination of his colleague at the stern. Placed between these two is the candidate, who clearly symbolises the Soul.

The candidate, however, is not alone on this journey, for we are specifically told that there are Hung brethren with him, neither are the mortals left to pass through this perilous period unassisted; the Lords of the Cardinal Points pole the ship and the eighteen Apostles of Buddhism are there to assist their followers. The humbler representatives of the candidate, the Captain and his wife, have their divine counterparts. On the bow is the *Image of the God of Fire*, and fire has at all times been regarded as the symbol of the Divine Spirit, while at the stern of the ship is the Blessed Queen of Heaven herself. Finally among other divine beings we are told that in the main hold of the ship is Kwan Yin, our Holy Mother, who according to Buddhist tradition harrowed hell.

What is the Boat mystically? Surely it is the Buddhist Church herself, and in this connection it is well to bear in mind that in the West during the opening years of the Christian era it was customary to symbolise the Christian Church as a ship. The signals of the Hung ship are red, the colour of the sun, and therefore the symbol of Light, and the early name for Buddhist temples in China was *Temples of Light* (Ming).

THE RIVER.

Turning to the River on which the boat travelled, we are told that it consists of the union of three rivers and that "they unite and lose themselves in five lakes and four seas." The three rivers which unite clearly refer to the triune nature of God and man. To the Western mind the Three Rivers would represent body, soul and spirit, and although in the allegory of the journey of the soul through the Underworld they stand for the three sub-souls of each man, in the Mystical interpretation we must remember that man is still in the flesh, and therefore the same explanation holds good. Hence in the mystical experience symbolised by the passage through the Underworld the conflicting claims of body, soul and spirit become harmonised and the man becomes one united entity, instead of three warring elements. But according to the Buddhists the process of synthesis must go further, and the drop return to the Ocean, which means, be merged in the Divine, and so we are told that the river empties itself into five lakes and four seas. The five and the four make

nine, the total of the Heavens of Sense and Form recognised in the Buddhist cosmology, and therefore mystically these represent the end of the journey. In this connection attention should be drawn to the fact that a visitor entering a Lodge of the Hung Society must bow nine times before he reaches the Master.[a]

The next factor is that the journey takes ten days, which mystically refers to the ten stems, which correspond with the ten Prajapatis of the Hindus and the ten Sephiroth of the Jews. In Hindu mysticism the traveller on his journey back to Paramatma is supposed to pass through the ten phases of spiritual development represented by the Prajapatis, and the same idea is the basis of a certain Rosicrucian Rite in the West. The 108 plants of rice which he picks on the journey symbolise the Mystic's absorption of all the various principles which govern the world. The arrival at the small island represents the mystical resurrection into Paradise, and corresponds with the resurrection of our Lord. But this is not the Vision Splendid and the Mystic has still before him a severe trial. The crossing of the River by the three stepping stones suggests his dependence on the Divine Trinity, which is emphasised by the presence of the three Buddhas on the Bridge, and it should be noted that all the travellers do not pass equally rapidly through this stage. It would appear as if those who depended on the high Trinity passed more quickly than those who depended on themselves, who are described as taking 21 paces.

But the candidate has to pass another barrier as well, and it is clear that the Mystic may travel thus far and yet fail at the final test. It will be remembered that at the end of the Bridge was an old man selling fruit. The pregnant passage is as follows:—

Master— To whom did he sell them?

Vanguard— He sold them to the loyal Hung Brethren.

Master— How do you prove that?

Vanguard— By this verse:—

Fruits of five colours stand by the wayside,
Thousands eat them and tens of thousands taste them;
If a true-hearted man eats he becomes a brother,
But if a traitor eats them he dies half way.

It is important to notice that ten times as many taste as eat, which implies that "many are called but few chosen." Herein there is a grim and important lesson overlooked by writers on Western mysticism. The path of the Mystic has its pitfalls quite as deadly as any to be found by those who are content to be worldlings. Indeed, it may truthfully be said that the sins which threaten the Mystic who has gone some way on his journey are far more deadly than those which threaten the man who has never heard the call to better things. The worlding may fall before the temptations of the world and the flesh, but seeing

(a) See Vol. I., p. 20.

that these affect mainly the body it is a very natural belief that when the body has perished such sins will gradually fall away and will be unable permanently to engrain themselves into the spirit. The sins which threaten the Mystic are of a different order, and are sins of the spirit, such as pride and the like. Such sins engrain themselves into the Spirit to such an extent that it is perfectly arguable that it may be next to impossible for the man to eliminate their effects even after death, and certainly during mortal life it is far harder to convince a man of spiritual pride than it is to make him realise the heinousness of sins of the flesh. It is probably this type of sin which is symbolised under the name of "Traitorous." In the West it may be remembered that the one sin which can never be forgiven is said to be blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and while the exact nature of this sin may be a question of dispute, in general it may be regarded as any line of conduct which indicates a definite deviation from what the individual *knows* to be the truth. It implies being false to oneself, or rather to the highest within one; teaching what one knows to be untrue; definite disobedience to the Light within us. In this connection it will be remembered that Moses was refused admission to the Promised Land because of what appears at first sight to be but a trifling deviation. In this particular example it seems as though Moses thought he knew better than the Most High, and having proved previously that when he struck the rock water came, would not attempt the new procedure and speak to it as instructed.

The next fact is the price for which the fruit is sold,—

Master— At what price did he sell them?
Vanguard— 21 Cash, neither more nor less.

Here twenty-one symbolically implies that a man must offer all his faculties, for according to one Chinese subdivision of man he has three souls and seven sets of faculties for each, and thus in Western language we should say he must offer all his faculties both of body, soul and spirit as a willing sacrifice. It will be noted that those who fail, as well as those who pass, the test make this sacrifice, but in the case of those who fail their motives are not disinterested, or in other words, they are not absolutely loyal to the Divine Light within them, and the fact that the Fruit of Eternal Life slays the traitors indicates that the mystic who fails in this final test brings about his own destruction, and it is the very Mystic Quest itself which destroys him, perhaps by producing within him arrogance and pride.

THE RESTRICTION OF THE BRIDGE TO THE SALVATORS.

We cannot altogether ignore the Bridge and its mystic meaning. The fact that it is not used by the aspiring candidate suggests that it is the path by which the Buddhas come, or, as we should say in the West, the Salvator. It is for those who, like the Buddha, achieve enlightenment, but instead of with-

drawing from the world into Everlasting Peace return to save others; those who have not yet achieved the Beatific Vision cannot do this. It will be remembered that Stanton has an interesting variation concerning this bridge, for in his version, after the Vanguard has said that it had two planks, his text continued as follows:—[a]

Master— It used to be a three plank bridge; why do you say it is only two?

Vanguard— Because at the termination of the Ming rule the Ts'ings broke one plank, and it has not yet been repaired. It is therefore of two planks.

This quotation implies that cosmically the termination of the Ming rule corresponds to the loss of Paradise, and means that the souls who have once entered matter no longer have free ingress and egress from whence they came. They must win their way back by hard struggle and much labour, but there appears to a hint that in the dim future there will be a millenium when "the lion shall lay down with the lamb" and the third plank be restored. Mystically this would mean that those who have seen the Beatific Vision no longer have to struggle towards the Light but can enter into the glory of the Lord in their own house when, and as, they please. This is their great reward. Thus in the mystical sense every Mystic who has achieved the Beatific Vision can henceforth perceive it when he will, and so far as he is concerned the third plank has been restored.

Having passed this test the traveller swiftly enters the Hung Gate where according to our allegory nothing very important seems to happen, but he is not yet in the High Heavens, for he next enters the Hall of Loyalty and Fidelity. This is the Judgment Hall and mystically represents that period when the Mystic having passed through the agony of Calvary and journeyed through the Underworld comes forth after his mystical resurrection to teach others. It is now that his work as a Teacher and Guide to those less experienced than himself is put to the test. Will he indeed bring a Light to those who sit in darkness or will he fail, not as a mystic, but as a Teacher, Comforter and friend? There are many Mystics who are quite incapable of teaching or helping others, and the Chinese allegory seems to imply that this is a grievous fault. Having after so much effort and labour achieved the Light, and having been assisted by the Powers on High, it is their bounden duty to help others. It is this final judgment which is set forth in the following lines:—

Vanguard— In the Hall of Loyalty and Fidelity there are neither great nor small:
Do not seek after honours and riches, and never oppress the poor:
If a traitor break his oath of blood brotherhood
He shall be led out of the Gate, and there be slain.

The first important phrase here is, "There are neither great nor small," which imparts the important lesson that the spiritual teacher of the world may be drawn from any rank. Buddha was the son of a king; Christ, a Carpenter. The next point is, "Do not seek after honour and riches and never oppress the poor." This is a warning to the successful teacher, who may be tempted to use his power and influence to establish his own prestige in an ecclesiastical sense, and be arrogant towards those who, not having had his experiences, are poor and ignorant in the spirit. We are further warned that the Mystic who fails to do his duty as a teacher and friend of the less enlightened is thereby cut off from the Light.

THE CIRCLE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

We now pass from the period of teaching, which corresponds with the forty days which elapsed between the Resurrection of our Lord and His Ascension towards that last and final consummation. The first stage is marked by passing through the Circle of Heaven and Earth, and the test verse which follows indicates that this brings about a realisation of the essential one-ness of all created beings in unison with the Supreme Being. The verse as given by the Vanguard is important and runs thus:—

Vanguard— Yin and Yang united, Heaven and Earth conjoined
First produced the Sons of Hung in thousands.
The faithful and loyal who pass this way
Shall ultimately accompany the Prince of Ming.

In the first two lines we have a summary of a mystical doctrine that all created beings are the result of the outpouring of the Spirit into matter, and since the phrase, "The Sons of Hung," means, "The Sons of an overwhelming inundation submerging all things," we obtain an allegory of the Great Sea, the Boundless Source of Light and Life, which is often spoken of by Mystics in the West, and plays such an important part in Buddhist thought in the East. The Sons of Hung are thus the drops of water which will at length return to the Great Ocean. But we are told that they will ultimately accompany the Prince of Ming (Light): this implies, therefore, something more than their mere absorption into non-being. It corresponds much more closely to our Western idea of entering into Heaven with Christ. In short, it clearly envisages the personal Saviour which, as we have previously pointed out, is one of the peculiarities of the Amitaba Cult in China.

The entry into the City of Willows corresponds with the Ascension of Christ into Heaven, and the next two lines remind us of the Christian doctrine of the fall of Adam and the restoration to Grace through Christ.

Master— Who founded this City and who restored it?

Vanguard— A Prince of T'ang founded it; Wan Yun Lung restored it.

In these phrases we have an almost exact counterpart to the Garden of Eden, which was lost through man's disobedience and, as it were, restored through Christ. In this connection it is worth while drawing attention to the legend related of Muk Yang Sheng on page 93 of Volume I., where the T'ang Emperor is clearly an allegory of the Divine messenger, who desires to win man's soul, finally succeeds through love, and thereupon pardons the sinner. The daughter of the hostile leader reminds us of the woman, Shekinah, found in certain Mystical Rites in the West, who falls from Grace and is rescued by the Saviour.

The description of the City itself is clearly allegorical and should be compared with the description of the Celestial City in Revelations. We need not go into the details, but would notice in passing that the Vanguard drinks of the Well of Living Water and his thirst is quenched, a fact which reminds us of the conversation between our Lord and the woman of Samaria wherein He said:—

"Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Thus it will be seen that the story of the journey of the candidate is an allegory of the mystical journey, but the Hung Heroes are not left without a hint as to what the authors of the ritual consider is the best manner in which to approach this Quest. The closing section deals with the Fiery Furnace, symbolising Hell, on which the Vanguard has this significant verse:—

Vanguard— Heaven sent down Hung-hai-erl who devoured men,
But we were saved, thanks to a priest of T'ang.
When the faithful and loyal pass this place,
They shall, in latter days, accompany the Prince of Ming.

Now we have seen that T'ang represented the Divine Messenger, and we cannot doubt that the Priest of T'ang means a priest of the Divine Messenger, that is to say, one teaching the Cult of Amitaba. In note 2 on page 100 of Volume I. we pointed out that certain pilgrims were saved from the Demon, Hung-hai-erl, by the intervention of Kwan Yin, who, it will be remembered, harrows hell and rescues the souls who are in bondage. We therefore see that the Hung Heroes firstly ascribe their salvation to the teaching of the Buddhist Divine, who instructed them concerning Amitaba, and secondly, that those who have achieved the end of the Quest shall return with him (the Prince of Light) and aid him to rescue the souls in Bondage. To put this into Western language, it would be as if we said that the souls of the Blessed shall descend with Christ to aid in the Harrowing of Hell.

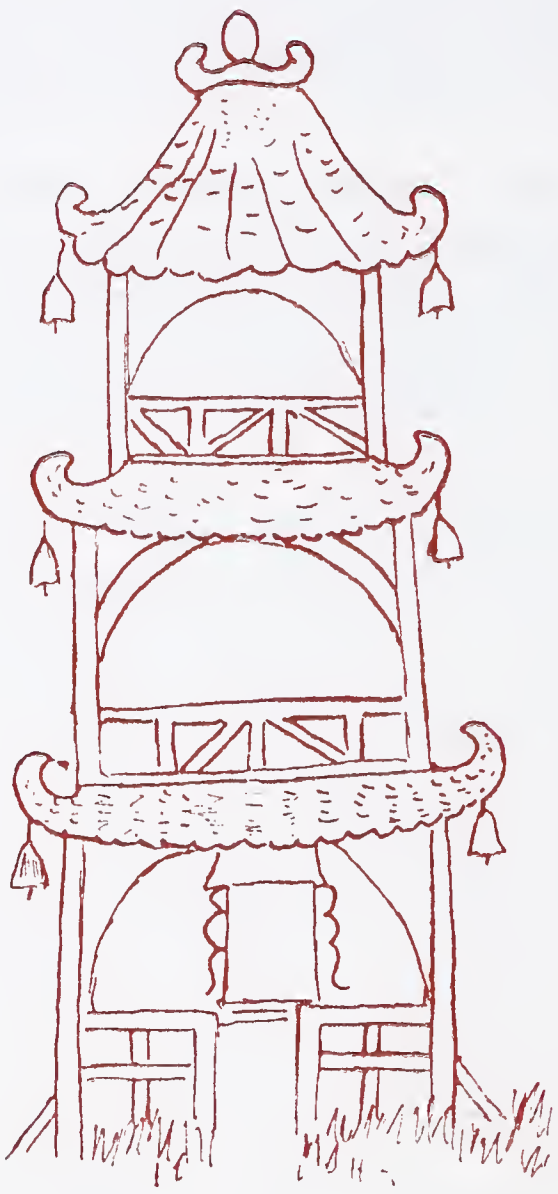
THE CITY OF HEAVEN.

That the mystical Heaven which the Hung Heroes seek is not the blank

nothingness so often ascribed to Buddhists by Western writers is shown by the verse on page 108 of Volume I,.—

> In the City of Willows we manifest our loyalty,
> In the Centre of a Palace of gold, pearls and precious stones,
> Our ancestor Buddha sits enshrined.

This, indeed, is but little removed from the orthodox Christian conception of Heaven during the Middle Ages, wherein Christ is represented both in picture and story as seated in Heaven surrounded by the Saints, and the chief joy of that Celestial Abode is the fact of being in the presence of Christ Himself. In like manner it is clear that although most Hung Heroes may envisage a somewhat material Heaven with houses and gardens, there are some who look forward to a more spiritual joy, that of being in the presence of Amitabha Buddha.



THE RED FLOWER PAVILION
SHOWING THE
MASTER'S THRONE.

A HINDOO FRESCO.
(Showing Avalokitesvara. C. 626 A.D. (Ajanta).

CHAPTER XVII.

THE POLITICAL SIDE OF THE HUNG SOCIETY AND PARALLEL POLITICAL RITES.

ALTHOUGH we have made it abundantly clear that originally the Hung Society was a Mystical Order with no political objects, during the last 250 years the latter have tended more and more to dominate its activities, with most unfortunate results. We therefore cannot ignore this side of the Society, and while considering it, will find it convenient to compare this aspect of its work with that of other Secret Societies.

One of the great dangers of all secret societies is that no matter how innocent or laudatory their original objects may be there is an ever present temptation to misdirect them into other paths. The instant those in charge of Mystical organisations begin to use them for other purposes than that of the spiritual development of their initiates along mystical lines, the danger becomes imminent that these societies will come into conflict with the mundane world outside, and ultimately with established authority itself. Sometimes this deviation is due to an unprovoked persecution, as appears to have been the case with the Hung Society. There is little doubt in my mind that if the new Manchu Dynasty had carried on the old tolerant attitude of the Ming Dynasty the Hung Society would never have drifted into the whirlpool of politics. We can feel a good deal of sympathy with the persecuted Hung brethren in view of the treatment to which they and their co-religionists were exposed by the Sacred Edict, and had we been members of the Society we might easily have been tempted to do what they then did. But looking at it from an impartial point of view, unswayed by prejudices on either side, one cannot fail to realise the fact that their entry into politics was disastrous from the higher spiritual standpoint, and was the immediate and direct cause of the moral degeneration which, according to numerous impartial witnesses, disfigures much of their later career.

No self-respecting Government can allow a great Secret Society to interfere in political matters, for inevitably sooner or later one of two things are bound to happen. Either the Secret Society will capture the Government and control it, or it will come into deadly conflict with it. It does not affect the question whether or not the aims of the Society are lofty, whether its members are striving to bring about a desirable reform, or working for their own ulterior motives, the fact remains that it is working secretly and underground, and is

equipped with an excellent machinery to enable it to carry on back-door intrigues and subversive movements. It it captures the Government the nation is faced with an appalling predicament. Officials and rulers alike will be appointed, not on democratic principles, which has much to justify it, not for efficiency and honesty, which is often obtainable even under a Government which cannot be regarded as strictly democratic, but because they are "sworn brethren." Thus no one who is not a member of that Order can expect preferment and very likely cannot obtain even justice should he come into conflict with a member of the Secret Society.

Under such circumstances there are only two courses open to non-members of the Society. Either to enter it, in which case the organisation becomes filled with place hunters and undesirable people, or else to organise opposition to it, which practically means a revolution. Fair and open political action becomes impossible, for the community is honeycombed with members of the Secret Society, probably acting on secret instructions, and practically serving as spies to unknown superiors. Intrigue and counter-intrigue become rife, and the very wells of political honesty are poisoned. Half the trouble in Latin countries is due to the uneasy suspicion, sometimes not altogether unjustified, that the Masonic Lodges and other secret societies are used in this way. If, on the other hand, the Government decides to take steps against the Secret Society, the result of its measures is usually to drive out of it all moderate men and all who have anything to lose. Men of position, rank and power retire from the organisation and its control falls entirely into the hands of desperate persons who have nothing to lose. Even if at first these members are sincere idealists, in order to gain influence in their struggle with established authority they find themselves unable to reject applicants for admission who are actuated by entirely unworthy motives, and before long a large section of the Society consists of men who are little better than criminals. This has emphatically been the case with the Hung Society in Singapore in recent years. These men use the Society in order to advance criminal objects and when even murder and theft are practised the miscreants are protected because they are brothers.

No self-respecting Government can allow such a state of affairs to continue, but the trouble is that it is exceedingly difficult to suppress such a society, and so there grows up a vicious circle. Decent men cannot enter the Society because it has become so disreputable, and only the entry of such men could stop this state of affairs. The Hung Society is a characteristic example of a magnificent spiritual organisation which has been thus diverted, and it must with sadness be admitted that to a limited extent the same thing has occurred with Latin Freemasonry. There are, however, many cases of Societies which have been brought into existence de novo with a deliberately political object, although attached to the Society is a definite ritual. Perhaps the most famous modern example of this type is the Ku Klux Klan, which has so many superficial resemblances to the Hung Society as to justify us in devoting some space to a consideration of it.

THE KU KLUX KLAN.

This Society came into existence in the Southern States of U.S.A. soon after the termination of the Civil War. As a result of the terrific conflict, the North not only made all negro slaves free but gave them the vote. As the negroes completely outnumbered the white population the result of the election was to place them in complete control of a large number of the Southern States. Mixed up with the Negroes were a number of white men of a very undesirable type. They were locally known as "carpet baggers" because they were men each with nothing but a carpet bag in his hands, of no financial standing, who came from outside the State on the look-out for remunerative jobs. In short, they were adventurers, often with a very low moral code, and with no interest in the well-being of the State itself, being merely anxious to fill their own pockets. These men were, of course, entirely dependent on the support of the negro voters, and with them monopolised all the official positions, including that of the Judiciary.

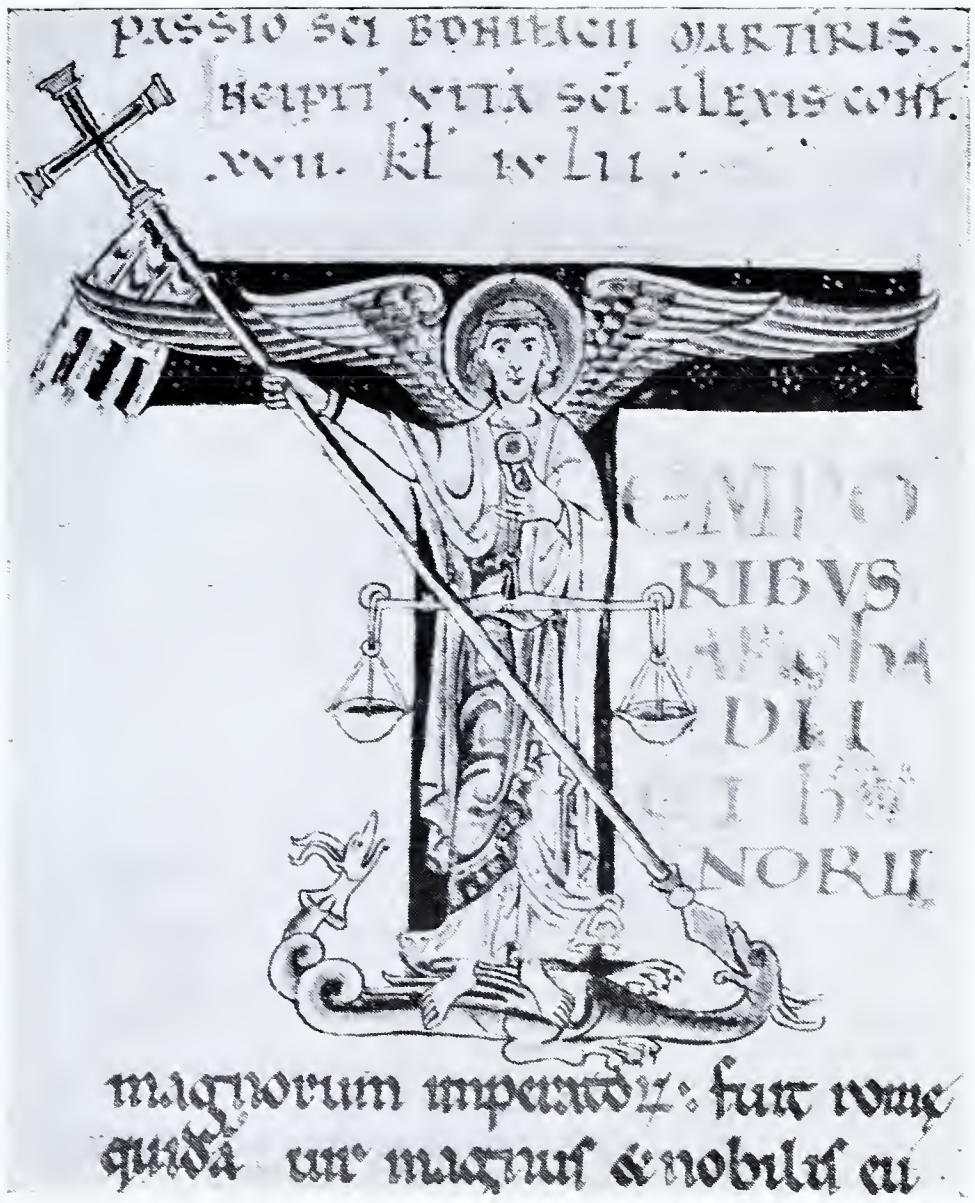
Now the negroes themselves had only just stepped out of slavery and were obviously untrained in administrative work. Many of them had grievances against the white men, and even under the best circumstances could hardly be trusted to act impartially towards their old masters. As a matter of fact it was generally the worst type of negro who obtained office, and both he and the "carpet-baggers" had only one object, to fill their own pockets and to please their negro supporters. The net result was an appalling state of affairs, amounting at times to a reign of terror. Not only was corruption rampant, but a white man who brought an action against a negro had a poor chance of securing justice. One offence which became particularly prevalent was the outraging of white women by drunken negroes, and even if the culprit was caught the judge and jury hardly ever convicted. In a general way he was not caught at all, for the negro police would take no steps to capture a compatriot for an offence against a white person.

The events which led up to the crisis and the formation of the Ku Klux Klan are undoubtedly historical, but they bear a curious analogy to the Hung legend of the two virtuous women who, in order to avoid being violated by the Imperial soldiers, flung themselves into the river and were drowned. In the American incident a white girl, pursued by a drunken negro, ran up a bluff and finding all means of escape cut off by a precipice flung herself from the top and was smashed to pieces. Her father and brothers found her mangled corpse and, dipping their hands in her blood, bound themselves by an oath to avenge not only her wrongs, but those of all white women, and never to rest until they had driven the negroes from power and the "Carpet baggers" out of the Southern States. The Society grew by leaps and bounds. The women would sit all day making the curious regalia of the Ku Klux Klan, which consisted of a white robe and a peaked cap, with a veil which covered the face, except that there were

holes for the eyes. Thus disguised, the white men would ride out night after night to avenge their wrongs and administer swift justice for any offence committed by negroes. It was practically civil war between the Ku Klux Klan and the Negro Government; a war of vengeance, in which no mercy was shown on either side. Outrage was followed by counter-outrage: innocent negroes perished with the guilty: but the Society grew, and just before its final triumph the Ku Klux Klan could put into the field 300,000 men. At length the Society so terrorised the negroes that the "carpet-baggers" fled back to the North, the negro officials retired from office, the State legislatures were everywhere purged of negroes and when fresh elections were held the white men, with rifles in their hands, simply prevented negro electors from going to the polls. The white men having recovered power, law and order were gradually re-established, and the necessity which caused the formation of the Society having passed away the Ku Klux Klan gradually died out.

It will be noticed that the objects which brought into existence the Ku Klux Klan were not very dissimilar from those which led to the re-organisation of the Hung Society on a political basis, for the Chinese regarded the alien Manchus with almost as much dislike and contempt as did the white men in the Southern States the Negro Government which had been thrust upon them. Under all the circumstances one cannot but feel considerable sympathy with the white men under the trying circumstances with which they were faced, although not prepared to palliate some of the outrages committed by their organisation in those early days. Such outrages are, however, the inevitable concomitant of any revolutionary movement and a cogent reason why all high-minded men should hesitate before embarking on a course which must lead to Revolution.

The revival of the Ku Klux Klan in 1915 was due to the excitement caused by the War and its objects appear originally to have been to develop patriotism and oppose the insidious methods employed by some of the German emissaries in the States. It was revived by three or four of the survivors of the original Society with these objects, but gradually it developed into an anti-Jewish and anti-Roman Catholic organisation. Its growth is one of the most peculiar and sinister problems of the last ten years. It is stated to-day that at least 5½ million men obey the orders of the Head of the Society, who is called the Emperor. Its avowed objects are: "To establish the permanent and perpetual predominance and rule of the white race in America and elsewhere." Briefly, its object seems to be a Protestant America. It admits women as well as men, although the former are apparently organised in separate sub-groups. Its great emblem is the cross, usually outlined in fire, and its initiations are generally held in the open, protected from intruders by an elaborate screen of scouts. The rapid growth of the Society is exceedingly puzzling, for at first sight there does not seem to be any overwhelming cause which would drive millions of level-headed law-abiding citizens to join a secret society whose warmest supporters cannot claim that it is above using methods of pure terror-



AN ILLUMINATED " T."
(Showing St. Michael and the Scales).

ism to achieve its objects. Its protagonists justify its existence by stating that, "except by accident, the average American citizen cannot rely upon obtaining justice if he comes into conflict with the International Financier or the Roman Catholic Church." The above is quoted from a manifesto of theirs which came into my hands, and it certainly seems a very strong assertion to make, and one which outsiders will hesitate to accept without fairly definite evidence. Be the cause what it may, the existence of a great organisation of this nature, which does not hesitate to use force to carry out its objects, which arrogates to itself the right to try men without reference to the established courts of the country and in defiance of the Government, is a serious problem for any nation. The existence of this problem will enable us to realise that perhaps the attitude of the Manchu Government was not altogether surprising, and that the policy adopted by various European Governments in the Far East towards the Hung Society has much to justify it.

CRIMINAL SECRET SOCIETIES.

The danger that such organisations as the Hung Society may gradually drift into being nothing more than criminal associations is not one which can be dismissed lightly. Two famous examples of avowedly criminal organisations are the Maffia and the Commora of Italy. These Societies have an elaborate ritual and signs and tokens by which members may recognise each other at any time, but their objects are purely criminal. There seems little doubt, however, that the Commora, at any rate, is the worn down remnant of some great initiatory rite, probably of vast antiquity, which has fallen into disreputable hands. The following incident will probably prove of interest to many of my readers:—A friend of mine, a professor at one of the English universities, was walking through the streets of Naples one night when he saw a man make a sign which he thought was Masonic. He answered it and the two got into conversation, which revealed the fact that his new acquaintance was not a Mason, but a member of the much dreaded Commora. The Italian, however, pressed him to come to a meeting, assuring him that he would be perfectly safe. My friend, being of an adventurous nature, accepted the invitation and passed a most interesting and instructive evening at a Lodge of the Commora, most of whose members were notorious criminals. No harm befell him at all, but he had to promise not to divulge the secrets of the ritual, thus he could give me no details but said that the ritual was really a very fine one and, though certainly not Masonic, had many striking affinities. The sign used was one well known to members of the Hung Society.

Numerous examples of political secret societies will occur to most of my readers and for the most part their history is one of turmoil, disorder, and deterioration. Their actions become more and more criminal and their activities less and less permissible in any State. It is therefore a somewhat

disturbing feature of modern times to find a tendency growing up to start secret societies, with a definite ritual, having political objects. No doubt in all these cases the original founders are animated by the loftiest motives and have no intention of overstepping constitutional limits, but the past history of previous movements of a like nature shows that it is almost impossible to carry on political agitation by means of a secret society without most undesirable results. The effect of any Rite is to bring under the influence of its rulers a large number of persons bound by peculiarly strong oaths of loyalty and obedience, and pledged to reciprocal obligations, which may easily place them in the difficult situation of having to choose between loyalty to those obligations and to the State.

One of the most startling proposals in recent years was contained in a statement in the *North Mail and Newcastle Chronicle* of March 16th, 1925, which informs us that at the Annual Meeting of the Morpeth Borough Unionist Association a proposal was carried that Lodges of the National Conservative League be established and work a ritual on lines similar to that used by Freemasons. Both a special badge and a secret ritual were mentioned, while it was stated that a prominent Conservative nobleman had agreed to be the first Provincial Grand Master. Whether such a scheme will prove successful only time can tell, but I have no hesitation in saying that it is a great mistake. If one party is to have a secret society of this nature others are likely to follow suit, and English Political life be honeycombed by the intrigues of the members of these societies instead of fighting openly and above board in the political arena.

Nevertheless, a modern example like this will help us to realise how easy it was to divert the old Buddhist, Mystical Rite of the Hung Society into a dangerous Political Organisation, and how this in its turn led to some branches of it becoming little better than the Maffia.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SYMBOLIC MEANING OF THE THREE DOTS BROTHERHOOD.

THE Three Dots Brotherhood, despite the fact that it was little better than a thieves' Society is not only clearly based on the Hung ritual, but deserves to be regarded as a quasi distinct Rite. Some of the differences between it and the Hung ritual are most instructive, and the impression grows upon the student that we have in this ceremony an attempt to amalgamate and shorten two or more separate degrees. It would seem as if the earlier part of the ceremony represents in some measure that missing degree, or degrees, which the nature of the Hung ceremony postulates. We will therefore endeavour to unravel the meaning of this ceremony, both for its own sake and because it throws many interesting sidelights on the Hung ceremony itself.

The first fact which strikes us is that the degree is worked from Sunset to Dawn, which shows that it is linked with the passage of the sun through the Underworld. The next point is that there are five Gates, for it is these which the trestles symbolise. It should be noted, however, that they are made sufficiently low to compel a man to have to stoop, or even to crawl, under them, therein differing from the Hung Gates which allowed the candidate to walk through in an upright position.

It will be perceived that the number of Gates differs from that in the Hung, for even if we count the Gate of the Lodge we can only make four in that ritual, and if we reckon in the Gate of this Lodge room we shall get seven, for we must include passing under the table on which stands the Statue of the God. It is the last incident which gives us the true key, for on passing under the statue the candidate sees a sword, a torch and a dead body (the fowl). These are clearly emblems of destruction and remind us that as soon as a child is born it is predestined to die.

BIRTH, LIFE AND DEATH.

The journey, straight up the Lodge room, denotes the descent of the soul into incarnation. According to the Chinese the last act which precedes birth is the distribution of the five Shen into the five Viscera, and then the child is ready to be born. Thus each of these Gates would indicate the passing of the last of these pre-natal stages, while his creeping underneath the God is a

symbolical birth. As all Hung Heroes are supposed to be warriors it is natural that the god which presides at their birth, and thus ushers them into incarnation, should be Kwan Ti, the god of War. The fact that the journey is straight, in contradiction to the subsequent journeys which the candidate takes, indicates the belief that the descent into matter is comparatively swift, whereas the journey through life, and also the postmortem journey is long. After all there is good physical justification for this idea.

His next action is to kneel between the sword and the corpse, but note, he does not pass between them. The symbolic significance of this is surely that deviation from the true course, to the right or left, means destruction, and we may suspect that the dead fowl also implies that if he presses on unguided he will be directly responsible for his own death, spiritually, perhaps, more than physically. He is then led away from this ill-omened *Gate*, if so it can be called, and journeys round the Lodge three times, following the course of the sun. The direction shows that this symbolises life on earth. The manner of his preparation has been previously explained, so it need not detain us, and the first incident on his journey is his purchase of a cup of water. This reminds us of Rites in the West, such as Baptism, with which the child is symbolically cleansed of its former sins. It is, however, more truly in analogy with the draught of the Waters of Lethe, which Virgil says was given to the soul in the Elysian Fields previous to its incarnation. The object of this draught was to wash away or obliterate the memory of former lives, and it may be that the original pre-Christ idea of Baptism was to cleanse the soul from its Karma of former misdeeds. In this ritual the cup of water is given symbolically after birth and not before, as in Virgil, the reason being that most Buddhist people aver that quite young children remember their previous lives until about the age of seven, when the memory gradually fades away. Many educated Burmese have told me this fact, backing their assertions by tales of the curious things which Burmese children had remembered before they reached seven. Therefore to the Chinese Buddhist the cup of Lethe would seem to be administered in the early years of earthly life, and it is this, I consider, that the cup purchased symbolises. It is probable that the fee represents the fee paid when a child is admitted to the Buddhist Church. For example, in the old days in Burma, about the age of seven, or soon after, all boys entered a monastery. The majority of them did not remain there permanently; they merely spent a few years there and were educated, returning subsequently to mundane life. It was natural that at such times parents made a small present to the Abbey.

IN THE UNDERWORLD.

It is noteworthy that this is the only incident mentioned in the ritual as occurring during the three journeys, which latter clearly symbolise youth, manhood and old age. There is not even a dramatic representation of death at the end

of the third journey, but possibly this may have been dropped with a view to shortening the ceremony. At the same time it is clear that symbolically the candidate *does* die, for at the end of the third journey he reverses his direction and goes contrary to the sun, of course implying that he is now dead and passing through the Underworld. It is only in his third round through the Underworld that dramatic incidents occur. The first of these incidents is his crossing the fire, which clearly symbolises crossing the Bridge over the Pit of Hell. This lands him in Paradise, where he purchases the Fruit of Eternal Life. As shown in the Hung ritual, this fruit constitutes the final test, for the evil souls perish on eating it. He next comes to the River which separates Paradise from the City of the Gods. This he crosses by means of the stepping stones, but the significant fact is that here he steps off *right* foot first. In the Hung ritual we saw that the candidate was carefully told to enter the Lodge *left* foot first, implying that he had to trample underfoot the Powers of Evil, but at this stage in the Three Dots Ceremony the Powers of Evil are left behind, for they were in the Pit of Fire, and so he steps forward with the propitious foot, in the way meant to placate the Spirits of Good and not in the manner he would use if attacking a foe. With regard to the last point, I have it on the authority of a medical man that there is a sound physical reason for advancing the left foot when about to engage in any violent physical exercise, such as fighting; the left side is nearer to the heart, and there is always a strain when starting to move forward, hence there is a lesser strain if you move the left side first.

THE INVESTITURE OF THE CANDIDATES.

This completes the actual ceremony, but nevertheless certain incidents follow. The first man initiated who belongs to the first rank, is given a fan. Now the fan symbolises the element of air, but in China it is also a badge of high office, and Generals constantly use it as a kind of insignia with which they give instruction. In some measure it would correspond to a Marshal's baton. It therefore implies two things:—that the recipient is the leader of the band of initiates, we might almost say a General in the service of the Lord of Light, and secondly, since air represents the Spirit, and Inspiration, that he is directly inspired from on high to lead his followers aright. We next learn that his forehead is bound with a red cloth, and it will be remembered that this red cloth is used to bind up the hair of a *female* corpse. The first fact, of course, indicates that he is symbolically dead and a Commandant of the Spirits who are returning to Earth to help men, while the fact that the colour is the same as that used for women, is a peculiarity we noted all through the Hung ceremony, and its probable intention is to imply that in the Army of the Blest there is neither male nor female, a fact which is emphasised by the admission of women into the Hung Society. It may, however, be meant to convey the lesson that the perfected spirit is an amalgamation of a male and female spirit. It will be

remembered that Swedenborg said that this was the characteristic of the angels, who consist of a male soul and a female soul united in one angelic form. In support of this view is the fact that in the Three Dots Brotherhood the candidates go through the ceremony in pairs, and it is specially laid down that whilst *they* pass under the Gates *their conductor* must pass outside, which implies that he must not in any way separate them whilst they are symbolically coming into incarnation. This procedure recalls a widespread belief that souls come into incarnation in pairs, male and female.

Finally the leader has a small rod stuck into the red band, attached to which is a piece of paper containing on it a drawing of the god, the picture being so arranged as to come over the candidate's forehead. The exact position supplies the key to the meaning of this emblem. It implies that the leader is a soldier of Kwan Ti and almost an incarnation of him, at any rate he is fighting under his form and in his name. The second man of the first rank receives no fan and has the picture of the god at the back of his head. This fact helps to confirm our conviction of the dual nature of the perfected man. The leader of the First rank has his consort, who shadows forth the female side of the Divinity. For this reason the second man does not hold the badge of rulership, the fan, and the position of his flag reminds us of the position of the Captain's wife on the Hung boat, which was at the stern, whereas the Captain was at the bow, We thus have a parallel to Amitabha Buddha and Kwan Yin, and no doubt the esoteric meaning of this ceremony is that Maitrêya Buddha will have a male, as well as a female, side and will come as a great Teacher of Light to aid mankind. In short, he is the coming Salvator. The second rank clearly represent his disciples, among whom one will be greater than the others, like Ananda, while the second receives a shoe, which symbolises the fact that he will spread the teaching of the Master, but cannot claim to teach in his own right. The third rank are the ordinary folk of this world, who will listen to the teaching of the Master and his disciples, and this fact is borne out by the closing ceremony, wherein the effigy of the god is carried to the entrance by members of the first and second ranks only. It means that the Master and his disciples teach the world concerning the nature of the Divine.

Although only two men receive regalia in either the first or second rank, the fact that there are many others admitted to these ranks implies that in due course they, too, will become Salvators, or disciples of a Salvator, respectively. In point of time one Salvator may come before another, and one set of disciples before another, but all in the first rank symbolise Salvators to come.

It will thus be seen that even this Thieves' Society is the remnant of a great Mystical Rite.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION.

THE FUTURE OF THE HUNG SOCIETY.

THIS must conclude, at any rate for the time being, our study of the Hung Society. There are still many problems to be unravelled which only time and further information can hope to solve, but certain facts appear to be established. We have seen that, despite the somewhat dubious channels into which the Society has been diverted, its rituals still constitute a wonderful allegory inculcating firstly, what is believed to befall a soul after death and secondly, a lofty mystical teaching. These facts in themselves constitute an interesting problem in the psychology of man. We have seen that even in the Three Dots Brotherhood, whose criminal objects none can deny, there yet survives this mystical allegory, although it is exceedingly unlikely that any of those who participate either understand, or care, for its inner teaching. How comes it then that the ancient landmarks have survived in such apparently unsuitable soil? This is a problem that each will answer in his own way, but to the author it suggests the fact that the Great Source of All uses various vehicles for His teaching and never lightly abandons any chosen vessel, no matter how men may abuse it. Further it would seem as if in the heart of even those whom authority regards as the most degraded, there yet lingers that spark of the Divine which reacts to the mystical teaching, although each individual himself is entirely unconscious of the fact. The great ritual is carried out although those who perform its ceremonies neither perceive its meanings, nor conform their lives to its moral precepts, because they are sub-consciously brought within the magic of its influence, and the Divine Spark within them is still sufficiently powerful to prevent the destruction of that within the Rite which will enable better men, with more apperceiving minds, at some future date to raise it from the degradation into which it has fallen, and make it once more a vehicle of enlightenment to an awakening race.

May it not be that the Hung ritual has been maintained intact because in the new China which is arising before our eyes it is predestined by the Divine Providence to play no small part in the spiritual life of the country. If even to Western minds, alien to Chinese modes of thought, the ritual conveys a sublime spiritual message, how much greater should be its appeal to the more spiritually minded Chinese, when the time comes to re-establish their spiritual

life on a firm basis. With such a dream before us it is worth while considering how such a ritual could fit into the spiritual life of modern China, after she has passed through the Valley of the Shadow of anarchy to a new and stable form of Government. At the moment all seems black in China. She is torn by rival factions and is sinking deeper and deeper in the quagmire, while before the eyes of her most enlightened citizens there must ever loom the fear lest foreign powers, taking advantage of her apparent weakness should endeavour to establish themselves within her borders in such a manner as would practically destroy her independence. Yet the dawn follows immediately after the blackest night, and sooner, or later, China is bound to emerge, regenerated by the very suffering through which that vast nation is now passing. The Dawn may be nearer than even her best wishers can hope, and the spiritual forces which will then move her will be of primary importance in her future welfare.

The ritual may therefore be viewed from two distinct standpoints. Firstly, it will be considered from that of the Buddhist or Taoist Chinese, whose desire is to reform their ancient faiths without destroying their historical continuity. To such men the ritual stands ready and needs hardly any alteration. It is but little corrupted by the wilder superstitions of the more ignorant Buddhists and Taoists. All that is really required is to attach to it a few brief lectures showing that it is an allegory, and what that allegory means. If some Chinese Sage should arise with this object in view, and should find that these volumes have enabled him to draw up such lectures, the writing of them by the authors will not have been in vain. It is a task well worth the attention of some learned Chinese, and of the whole-hearted support of the educated classes in China. There is no greater catastrophe for any nation than to break abruptly the line of its historic development. The traditions of the past are invaluable, and though China has many lessons to learn from the Western world her own traditions and teachings should not lightly be thrown aside. If any such step is to be taken two conditions are essential. Men of position and education must be prepared to enter the Society, and recapture it from the type of man who, in some parts of the world, now controls the Lodges, and the other factor is that all matters of politics should be rigidly eschewed. The Society will never be re-established on a firm basis so long as politics enter into its composition in any way. To many patriotic Chinese it must seem an attractive proposition to try and re-establish the reputation of the Society by developing it as a patriotic organisation, which should set before itself the task of reviving the sense of nationality and reuniting China as one solid State. But this is a dangerous task, for the inevitable result, as previous experience has shown, will be that the Society will find itself compelled to use its influence against some section of the community, whom its members consider are not acting patriotically. Opinions may legitimately differ as to whether a certain line of action is, or is not, calculated to benefit the whole nation, and thus sooner or later the Society would be bound to become an instrument of party politics.

THE CHILD BUDDHA.

(Wearing an Apron and making the Buddhist Sign calling Heaven and Earth to Witness).

Secondly there is another problem which will face the Chinese nation in the near future. Until recently there have only been three religions in that country, which have had any considerable following, namely, Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. So far as the Taoists and Buddhists are concerned the past history of the Society shows that they find no difficulty in joining in the Rites of the Hung Society, and it is probable that most Confucians would find little with which to quarrel in the bulk of the ritual, except possibly the names of certain Taoist Deities. As a matter of fact, however, few members of the Confucian faith seem to belong, and as this religion embraces most of the more intellectual section of the nation, any reasonable concessions which could be made to them would be deserving of sympathetic consideration.

There is, however, to-day a fourth religion in China, whose membership is rapidly increasing, and which includes in its ranks many of the more progressive leaders in the State, namely, Christianity. The bulk of the Hung ceremonies are capable of a mystical explanation which would appeal just as much to an intellectual Christian as to a Buddhist, or Taoist, and it is most desirable that in rejuvenated China there should exist a Rite, like Freemasonry in the West, in which men of all religions can co-mingle in fraternal relations, and each in his own way seek the Light. To enable this to be done no ancient landmarks would have to be removed, neither would the bulk of the framework or legend require alteration. All that would be needed would be the elimination of the names of Taoist or Buddhist Divinities, invocations to whom would be impossible to a Christian and possibly distasteful to a Confucian. Thus the Prayer of invocation offered by the Vanguard would have to be directed to Heaven alone, without specific reference to particular Deities, but it might be possible to replace some of these lesser Divinities by some words which would convey to the Christian the idea of saints and angels, and to the Taoist, his gods. The matter is at any rate deserving of careful consideration, for if, by a few concessions such as these, the Rite could be made acceptable to men of every faith in China, the beneficial influence of the Hung Society would be vastly extended, and the danger of its being turned into a Society for the political aggrandisement of one particular faith would be removed. For these reasons a careful study of the Hung ritual is suggested to all missionaries, who, even if they find there are practical difficulties which render it impossible for their converts to join a regenerated Hung Society, will nevertheless themselves benefit enormously, since their study of these rituals will give them a far clearer insight into the spiritual aspirations and beliefs of the Chinese than would the study of many books on the external forms of the indigenous Chinese faiths.

In conclusion let me say that for good or evil the Hung Society exists, and if 250 years of persistent persecution by the Chinese Government have failed to suppress it, those who now criticise it have no excuse for expecting that they will ever be able forcibly to destroy it. It clearly appeals to an instinct in the

Chinese nation which must be satisfied, and, this being so, the alternative course of revivifying its moral tone is the only one which can be tried with any hope of success. That it will ultimately revive in a more spiritual form, I, at least, am convinced, and the responsibility of directing it into a safe and beneficial course is one of the most important tasks before the leaders of modern Chinese thought.

THE NINE STORIED PAGODA.

APPENDIX I.

THE GORMOGONS.

IT will be clear from the contents of these three volumes that the Hung Society has numerous points of similarity with Freemasonry, and the question therefore arises whether a mysterious and supposedly Chinese Society which appeared in England in 1724, or possibly earlier, and set itself up as a rival to Freemasonry, was indeed derived from the contemporary Hung Society or from some other Chinese Society at that time active in the Far East.

The first official notification of the existence of this Society appears to be that which was published in the *Daily Post* of September 3rd, 1724.[a] The statement runs as follows:—

"Whereas the truly Antient Noble Order of the Gormogons, instituted by Chin-Quay Ky-Po, the first Emperor of China (according to their account), many thousand years before Adam, and of which the great philosopher Confucius was Œcumenical Volgee, has lately been brought into England by a Mandarin, and he having admitted several Gentlemen of Honour into the Mystery of that most illustrious order, they have determined to hold a Chapter at the Castle Tavern in Fleet Street, at the particular Request of several persons of Quality. This is to inform the public, that there will be no Drawn Sword at the Door, nor Ladder in a dark Room, nor will any Mason be receiv'd as a Member till he has renounced his Novel Order and been properly degraded. N.B.—The Grand Mogul, the Czar of Muscovy, and Prince Tochmas are enter'd into this Hon. Society; but it has been refused to the Rebel Meriweys, to his great Mortification. The Mandarin will shortly set out for Rome, having a particular Commission to make a Present of this Ancient Order to His Holiness, and it is believ'd the whole Sacred College of Cardinals will commence Gormogons. Notice will be given in the Gazette the Day the Chapter will be held."

Now the first thing which strikes us about this notice is the particular reference made in Protestant England to the intention of the Order to initiate the Pope and Cardinals, a point to which they refer also at a later date, and many competent Masonic historians consider that the whole society was a counterblast engineered by the Jesuits against Freemasonry, and that they either intended it as an alternative to Freemasonry, which at this time was

(a) R. F. Gould, *The History of Freeamsonry*. Vol. IV., p. 377.

receiving into its ranks many Roman Catholics, or else hoped by a burlesque ceremony to make Masonry appear ridiculous. It is certainly significant that we hear practically no more of the Gormogons after the Pope issued his famous Bull against Freemasonry in 1738. On the other hand, Gould illustrates a medal, [a] to which we shall refer later, which seems to show that the Order survived, at any rate until 1799, if so it no doubt perished as a result of the Act passed in July 12th in that year which aimed at suppressing all secret societies, and wherein Freemasonry, but not, of course, the Gormogons, was especially exempted.

If then the Jesuits had some hand in the formation of this Society it is worth recalling that they were one of the greatest Missionary forces in Europe at this period, and had missions in China and even to some extent had established themselves on a friendly footing with the Emperor. Therefore the possibility of some missionary having picked up information about the Hung Society cannot be excluded. We know that just about this time the Hung Society was spreading very rapidly and coming into conflict with the Imperial authorities, and it is therefore quite possible that some Jesuit Father may have acquired at any rate second-hand information on the subject, and suggested to some of his Superiors in Europe that this information, suitably doctored, would serve as a basis for an anti-Masonic Society.

That the Roman Catholic Church is quite prepared to run a Secret Society as a counter attraction to Freemasonry is proved by the fact that she has called into existence in America the *Knights of Columbus*, and so there is nothing fantastic in the suggestion of Kloss and Gould that this is the true origin of the Gormogons, although neither of them suggests what is equally probable, an indirect Chinese connection. That the Society had something which appealed to men who were already attracted to Freemasonry is indicated by the fact that quite a number of Freemasons allowed themselves to be "Degraded" in order to join this other Order. Thus the *Weekly Journal* or *Saturday Post* of October 17th, 1724, stated that "Many eminent Freemasons" had "*degraded themselves*" and joined the Gormogons.

In the second edition of the *Grand Mystery of the Freemasons Discovered*, published on October 28th, 1724, there is an account of the Gormogons, while the *Plain Dealer* of September 14th of the same year published a letter purporting to come from a Mandarin at Rome to another in London, in which the former congratulates the latter on the rapid progress he has made from "the Court of the Young Sophy", adding "Your presence is earnestly expected at Rome. The Father of High Priests is fond of our Order and the Cardinals have an Emulation to be distinguish'd. Our Excellent Brother Gormogon, Mandarin, Chan Fue, is well, and salutes you."[b]

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[a] Ibid. 379.

[b] Ibid. 378.

In the *British Journal* of December 12th, 1724, the following appeared:—

"We hear that a Peer of the First Rank, a noted Member of the Society of Freemasons, hath suffered himself to be degraded as a member of that Society, and his Leather Apron and Gloves to be burnt, and thereupon entered himself as a Member of the Society of Gormogons, at the Castle Tavern in Fleet Street."

All Masonic writers agree that this was the eccentric Duke of Wharton. This Peer was Grand Master of the Freemasons at the Grand Lodge held at Merchant Taylor's Hall on Monday, June 24th, 1723, and he named the Earl of Dalkeith as his successor. Apparently there was some dispute between the Past Grand Master and his successor at the banquet, and the matter going to the vote he lost the day. It seems as if feeling ran rather high and that the Duke of Wharton was seriously offended at what transpired, which no doubt accounts for his apostasy. For all that, in 1728 we find him constituting a lodge at Madrid, just as if nothing had happened, but as this lodge subsequently applied "to be constituted properly" it is evident that they had their doubts as to whether he could be regarded as a Mason in good standing.

In the *Daily Journal* of October 26th, 1730, we find a notice summoning a meeting of the Order to be held at the Castle Tavern, signed by P.W.T., and a similar notice appears in the same journal of October 28th, 1731, signed F.N.T.. On the other hand, we find a statement in the *Weekly Journal* or *British Gazetteer* of April 18th 1730, which informs us that a Mr. Dennis was admitted a Freemason "having renounced the Society of the Gormogons, of which he had been a member for many years."

The jewel of this society which is illustrated by Gould, contains on the obverse a sun set inside an inscription, which is surmounted by a dragon, and underneath is a projection with the words, "An. Inst. 8,799." On the reverse is the head of a man in regalia, with a curious head-dress, and on the projection, "An. Reg. xxxix." It is now generally agreed by Masonic students that the year 39 can only mean Anno Regni 39 of George III, which would be 1798—99. This would compare with An. Ist. 8799, implying that the Order was founded 8,799 years ago, i.e. 6,000 years before the beginning of the Christian era.

It is unfortuante that we know so little about the actual ritual of the Gormogons as to be unable to judge whether it was entirely burlesque or actually contained serious and impressive ceremonies, but it is always possible that additional information may come to hand in some unexpected place, and if any brother should come across such information I should be very glad if he would get into touch with me, as it is just possible that the Gormogons might throw a good deal of light on a tangled period of Masonic history and reveal an unexpected connection with the great Secret Societies of China.

APPENDIX II.

WOMEN AND THE HUNG SOCIETY.

IT is quite clear from all accounts that women are eligible for the Hung Society; not only are there Women Founders of the Order, who are commemorated on the Tablets of every Temple, but the legend of the untimely death of the two virtuous women appears to be a special feature for the benefit of female candidates.

For all that, it is evident that in the majority of cases the women are not initiated in the Temple but that a group of Officers go to their houses and confer the degree upon them. How much of the ceremony is worked on such occasions I have been unable to ascertain, but in view of the difficulty of setting out the Temple in full and of having a large gathering it seems probable that it is given in a somewhat truncated form.

Under these circumstances a natural query arises in the mind of the student. What is the reason which leads the Hung Brethren to confer this degree on women? Two possible explanations occur to the mind. (1) That it is simply a device for shutting the mouths of female relatives of the brethren, so that should the latter inadvertently disclose information it will go no further, and on the other hand in times of emergency and danger the women will help Hung Brethren who are in difficulty with the Police. (2) That beyond the Hung Society exists a still more secret degree, in which for ritual or symbolic purposes women are essential. As one studies the Hung Ritual the feeling grows upon the reader that to complete the symbolism there should be something beyond the ceremony as worked in an ordinary lodge. The candidate symbolically passes through the Underworld to the City of the Gods, but though he enters the gates of that City we obtain but little information concerning what befalls him there. Clearly there should be some ceremony of his reception among the Blest, symbolising his union among the Princes and Saints, and possibly his Union with the Supreme Being. Then again one feels that Kwan Yin, who plays such an important part in the exoteric Buddhist religion of China, hardly takes so prominent a position in the ceremony as one would expect. In like manner the Taoist Western Paradise is presided over by the Queen of the West, and under these circumstances it is strange that apparently no provision is made for women officers. On the other hand, there seem to be no offices open to women in the Hung ceremony as it stands, why then should they be admitted at all? If, however, beyond the Hung ritual existed an inner degree wherein Kwan Yin, or the Queen of the West, sur-

rounded by her attendants, received the triumphant heroes into the Celestial abode, we could appreciate the desirability and almost the necessity for women officers, who would need to qualify in this earlier degree.

In the Ancient Mysteries we have abundant evidence not merely that women were admitted to the degrees, but that the Goddesses played an important part, and that there were Priestesses as Officers. Indeed, in the Rites of Eleusis there seems to be little doubt that there was a female heirophant who worked in conjunction with the male heirophant, probably representing the Marriage of Heaven and Earth. The matter at any rate is clearly one which calls for further investigation, and it is with the hope that some student residing in China will be inspired by these lines to investigate the matter more fully that this appendix is written. Should he discover anything of value I sincerely hope that he will follow Brother Stirling's example and get in touch with me, since the information he obtains may help us to disentangle many obscure facts connected with the Ancient Mysteries, particularly those of Isis, Eleusis and Cybele.

APPENDIX III.

THE SQUARE AND COMPASSES IN CHINESE SYMBOLISM.

TO the average Masonic reader it must have seemed strange in view of the number of analogies to Freemasonry found in the Hung Society that there was no trace of the symbolic use of the square and the compasses, but if he will recollect that the Hung Rite corresponds not to our Craft but to the higher degrees, he will perceive that their absence is not surprising. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it would be symbolically incorrect for the square at any rate to appear in the Hung ritual.

The square represents matter and therefore the body, and seeing that the Hung Heroes are symbolically dead the square is naturally excluded. On the other hand, we find that both square and compasses are widely used as symbols by the Chinese, and that from almost the earliest point in their history. Thus Fu Hsi, the legendary Founder of the Chinese State is always represented both in art and literature as holding in his hand a gallows square, while his consort holds what is usually described as a pair of compasses, although to the Western mind these seem to be more like a cross, than the form common among us. Nevertheless, as the Chinese regard them as compasses we must do the same, and a representation of the pair appears opposite page 122 in Volume II.

As the Founder and creator of the Chinese State it is perfectly appropriate that Fu Hsi and his consort should have these tools as their emblems, for in a sense they may be regarded as the architects of the future greatness of China. The Chinese, however, clearly used these tools to convey important moral teaching, and we get constant references to them in the Chinese Classics. Thus in the *Book of History*, B.C. 1200, we find the following sentence:—"Ye officers of the Government apply the compasses." In *The Great Learning*, B.C. 500, appears this sentence:—"A man should abstain from doing unto others what he would not they should do unto him, and this is called the principle of *acting on the square*."[a]

Mencius, the disciple of Confucius, writes, "Men should *apply the square and compasses morally* to their lives, and the *level and marking line* besides, if they would walk in the straight and even path of Wisdom, and keep themselves within the bounds of honour and virtue." This last phrase is important as we get three virtues, corresponding to some extent with the wisdom, strength and beauty of the Masonic system. We also get as it were a middle path,

a) G. Giles, *Freemasonry in China*, also Gould *The History of Freemasonry*.

bounded by the two straight lines, which we get in the Masonic emblem of the circle, similarly bounded by lines; usually spoken of as the two St. Johns.

The same author in his sixth book says, "A *Master Mason* in teaching his apprentices makes use of the *compass and square*. We who are engaged in the pursuit of Wisdom must also make use of the compass and square."[a] Here we have a definite comparison with Operative masonry, evidently deliberately taken by the Sage, and one is irresistibly driven to the conclusions that the phrase was a catch phrase, conveying a definite symbolic meaning to his readers. This view is further strengthened by the account given by Brother Chaloner Alabaster who states that in the earliest historic records of China there are traces of a Society which taught a system of faith by means of allegories illustrated by Masonic tools. According to him they spoke of a symbolic temple erected in the desert, and he adds that the officers of the Society wore distinguishing jewels and leather aprons.[b]

Brother Alabastor's reference to leather aprons is of peculiar importance because, as will be seen from the illustration opposite page 122 in this volume, the Child Buddha is shown wearing an apron, and the significance of the fact is further strengthened by the circumstance that he is making a sign which we know to be one of the signs of the Hung Society. In China this sign is usually called the "Witness sign," and in the legends it is so called because Buddha called Heaven and Earth to witness his innocence from the charge made again him by a wicked woman. That the legend has been made up at a date long subsequent to the use of the sign is clear from the fact that here the *child* Buddha is making it, against whom any such charge would have been ridiculous. A much more probable explanation of its origin is that it implies that he descended to earth and subsequently reascended to Heaven, or, vice versa, that having ascended he was not content to remain in selfish peace but descended to earth, or even into the Underworld, to the aid of his fellow men. At any rate, here we have the use of a Hung Sign associated with the apron, and, according to brother Alabaster, the use of the apron associated with Masonic tools and the building of a temple.

In view of all the above facts one is inclined to ask whether there do not exist secret societies in China which ritualistically precede the Hung ceremony. It is clear that the Traditional History but inadequately supplies that part of the symbolic journey which precedes death, and therefore there seems nothing unreasonable in suspecting that, among the Trade Guilds, particularly the Masons, in China there exists some such initiation ceremony which might serve as a preparatory grade for members of the Triad Society. At all events we can say definitely that these Trade Guilds are exceedingly powerful, and that in

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(b) Legge, *Chinese Classics*, 1229-45.

(b) Ars. Quat. Cor., Vol. ii., 121-24.

India the native Operative Guilds certainly have ceremonies of initiation which include the use of Masonic signs as methods of recognition. In view then of the constant symbolic references to the square and compasses in Chinese literature and art we are not justified in assuming that they play no part in her initiatory rites, although we recognise that the Chinese are quite correct in omitting them in a ceremony which sets out allegorically the after-death experiences of the soul.

The strange way in which signs persist and wander round the world, to turn up in the most unexpected places, is shown by the illustration (opposite page 130) of a Dollar Note, depicting the Pilgrim Fathers sighting land. The figures are clearly making signs, among which is the so-called sign of Fire of the Hung Society, although here it probably denotes distress in general. For certain reasons objection was taken to this design, and the note was in consequence withdrawn from circulation. Whatever was the original source of inspiration for the use of these signs on this occasion, we may feel perfectly certain it was not Hung, despite the appearance on the note of a pair of scales, which might mislead the unwary, but which doubtless merely symbolise the Treasury.

SEAL OF THE HUNG MASTER.

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